







PLAYS AND SONNETS

BY

✓
ERNEST LACY

11



Etchings of

Julia Marlowe as Chatterton and Joseph Haworth as Rinaldo

BY

STEPHEN J. FERRIS

PRINTED BY

SHERMAN AND COMPANY

PHILADELPHIA

1900

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TO
JOHN L. KINSEY, ESQ.,
AS A TOKEN OF RESPECT AND GRATITUDE,
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED



AUTOGRAPH EDITION

Limited to Two Hundred and Fifty Copies

No. 37

Ernest Hacy-

Printed for

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Chatterton.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THOMAS CHATTERTON, "*the marvelous boy.*"

HENRY BURGUM, *a rich Bristol pewterer.*

BERTHA BURGUM, *his daughter.*

MRS. ANGELL, *keeper of the lodging house.*

Two Ribalds, man and woman.

SCENE—London.

TIME—August 24th, 1770.

CHATTERTON.

SCENE.—*A Garret in Brooke Street, London. Case-ment at back C. opening on the street; door, L. 3. E.; rough bedstead R. of window; rude chairs and table, with candle, manuscripts, and writing materials on it, L. C.; old washstand, on which are a glass, a basin, and a broken jug of water, R. 2. E. The Garret is in the house of Mrs. Angell, and is the lodging of the Poet Chatterton. It is the night of August 24th, 1770. Music on rise of curtain. A distant bell is heard tolling the hour.*

Mrs. Angell. [*Knocking from without.*] Mr. Chatterton! [*Knocking.*] Mr. Chatterton! [*Knocking.*] Mr. Chatterton!

Enter MRS. ANGELL *with lamp.* *Lights up.*

Mr. Chatterton, a gentleman—[*Looking around.*] Alack! the boy is out. [*Places lamp on table, and goes back to door.*] Come in, sir.

Enter BURGUM *and* BERTHA.

Mr. Chatterton is not in. Will you wait, Mr.—, Mr.—

Burgum. [*Pompously.*] Mr. de Burgum, Madam.

Chatterton.

I trust that I shall have a more honorable title soon ;—
eh, daughter?

Bertha. There is no more honorable title, father.

Burgum. Bah ! romantic.

Mrs. Angell. He surely will return soon : he is
seldom out in the evening.

Burgum. I 'll await his coming. I must see him on
a matter connected with the de Burgum Pedigree, which
he was fortunate enough to discover. I say "fortunate
enough," since otherwise some one else would have dis-
covered it—birth, like murder, will out.

Mrs. Angell. Pray be seated, sir. [*Burgum sits R.
of table ; Bertha, L.*]

Burgum. [*Looking around the room.*] The rewards
of poetry, my dear.

Bertha. The rewards of poetry, father, only poets
know.

Burgum. Another romantic speech ! If you must
worship a poet, worship my collateral ancestor, Master
John de Bergham, a Cistercian monk, one of the
greatest ornaments of his age—so the Pedigree reads—
and a translator of the Iliad. This boy never can be a
poet : he knows no Latin and Greek.

Bertha. He is not writing Latin and Greek.

Burgum. I regret that I permitted you to come.

Chatterton.

You are a sentimental girl likely to fall in love with such a vagabond as Chatterton.

Bertha. Do not call him a vagabond, father: you owe so much to him.

Burgum. For what?

Bertha. Your Pedigree.

Burgum. He has been paid.

Bertha. Yes—a crown.

Burgum. Hem! He shall have more after the College of Herald's has passed upon my claims—not before.

Bertha. In the meantime he may starve.

Mrs. Angell. Indeed, lady, he is starving now.

Burgum. Nonsense! One-half the troubles in life are due to gorging. Besides, I heard before we left Bristol that he had sent his mother some china and dress patterns—even British herb-tobacco and a pipe for his grandmother. Starving?—nonsense!

Mrs. Angell. That was over a month ago, sir. Then he always was telling of what he was going to do for his mother; but now he seems so hopeless, and still he writes so hopefully to her. I do not believe he has had a morsel of food these two days. He is too proud to take anything from me. He says he is not hungry, and yet he looks almost famished.

Bertha. Poor Chatterton!

Chatterton.

Burgum. Why does he not work?

Mrs. Angell. He does work, sir—all night sometimes—writing, writing, writing.

Burgum. I mean at something profitable—looking up pedigrees, for instance,—the boy has a genius for pedigrees.

Mrs. Angell. I believe he is trying to get an appointment as surgeon's mate. My husband, good man, offered to secure him a place as a compter; but Mr. Chatterton stormed about the house.

Burgum. A poet's gratitude.

Bertha. A poet's indignation 'gainst a clown.

Mrs. Angell. My husband is no clown, lady.

Bertha. I beg your pardon, Madam.

Burgum. [*To Mrs. Angell.*] Pay no attention to her: she is as crazy as Chatterton.

Bertha. I would I were.

Burgum. Bah! You are half in love with the beggar already.

Mrs. Angell. If he had a chance, sir, I think he would make something great.

Bertha. I am sure of it!

Burgum. You never met him.

Bertha. But I have seen him, and have read his poems.

Chatterton.

Burgum. That doggerel in the "Town and County"?
[*Taking a paper from table.*] Here is more of it.
[*Glances at paper.*] What 's this? [*Reads.*]

"Gods! what would Burgum give to get a name
And snatch his blundering dialect from shame?"

The ingrate!

"What would he give to hand his memory down
To time's remotest boundary—a crown.
Would you ask more, his swelling face looks blue;
Futurity he rates at two pounds two."

Zounds! this of a de Burgum—a descendant of Simon
de Seyncte Lyze, a companion of William the Con-
queror!

Mrs. Angell. Be not angry with him, sir; he is not
like one of us.

Enter CHATTERTON, who pauses near doorway.

Burgum. Thank heaven for that! I will not longer
brook

The impudence of this ungrateful boy,
Who mutters, rants, and doth himself opine
One of the brooding darlings of the world.
By what right is he moody and revengeful?

Bertha. He is as nature made him: full of pride

Chatterton.

And fierce resentment 'gainst a callous race.
Give him but patience to endure neglect—
Quell his rebellious spirit, and you take
From his tossed soul God's gift of poesy.

Chatterton. [*Coming forward.*]

Lady, were I the poet of my dreams,
Instead of Chatterton, I could not word
My gratitude to you.

Bertha. 'T is Chatterton !

Chatterton. Well, Burgum, what 's the news ?

Burgum. [*Aside.*] Impertinence !

Mrs. Angell. [*To Chatterton.*]

Be seated, sir ; you must be very tired ;
You have not been at home since ten o'clock.
The day—

Chatterton. [*Sinking upon a chair.*]

Clouds, sunshine, rain—I 'll sleep to-night.

Mrs. Angell. Is there not something I can get you,
sir ?

Chatterton. Ah, yes : go purchase me another
heart ;

The world has worn this out—'t is like my shoes.

Mrs. Angell. When through with business you must
dine with us :

I have some sheep tongues I would have you try.

Chatterton.

Chatterton. What use are sheep tongues when I needs
must roar?

I 'd eat a lion's litter.

Bertha. [*Aside.*] O, how strange!

Mrs. Angell. [*Aside.*] The boy talks very wildly.

Chatterton. [*Impatiently.*] Madam, go!

You 'd make a helpless invalid of me.

[*Exit Mrs. Angell.*]

She is a noble woman and a bore.

Now, Norman blood, what 's wrong in Bristol that

Brings you to town?

Burgum. Let us be serious, sir.

Chatterton. First let me borrow Lord North's goggle
eyes,

And have the modish stare: my fiery orb

Disquiets men of birth. Go on, go on.

Burgum. My pedigree—

Chatterton. Should antedate the flood:

I 'll read your partner's brother's silly book

On the Noachian Deluge, and report

What I can glean.

Burgum. [*Aside.*] Did I not need his help,

I 'd cane the rogue. [*To him.*] I 've brought my
quarterings

And pedigree that you did kindly trace

Chatterton.

To be examined and attested by
The Herald's College.

Chatterton. [*Aside.*] George !
He 'll find 't is all a hoax !

Burgum. They have them now.
I must solicit you to go with me,
And answer certain questions. I 'll pay you well.

Chatterton. Not for the wealth of Soho Square, my
lord.

I am the Duke de Garret : they must come
To interview me here.

Burgum. Impossible !

Chatterton. Then let them nose among their dusty
tomes

To solve the riddles.

Burgum. [*Indignantly.*] 'T is an outrage, sir !
I am a lineal descendant from—

Chatterton. [*Laughing.*] I copied that, and know it
all by rote.

Your ancestor, in reign of Henry Sixth,
Obtained a royal patent to transmute
All the inferior metals into gold ;
And now, while George the Fat squats on the throne,
You, by that charter, deal in pewter, sir.
From gold to pewter—'t is a fearful fall ;

Chatterton.

And yet you glory in it. O for shame !

Burgum. Remember that my daughter 's here.

Chatterton. Forgive me.

If I could aid you, I do vow I would,
But 't is beyond my power. [*Aside.*] I do regret,
For her sweet sake, I played the prank.

Burgum. Well, well ;

I fear your going would not further me.

Chatterton. [*Aside.*] You 'll learn that soon enough.

Burgum. [*Taking coin from purse.*] Here is a shilling ;

Your landlady asserts you are in need.

Chatterton. [*In anger.*] 'T is false !—a lie !

Burgum. Well, Bertha, was I right ?

And, Chatterton, I 'll give you this advice.

You eat too much or too irregular.

A much disordered stomach is a rot

From which young imps, bred like to maggots, rise,

And pester sore the brain. Could I destroy

The miseries by bad digestion blown,

I 'd be the benefactor of the age—

Yea ! of all time. The world is gone astray :

Your melancholy bard o'erloads his paunch,

And thinks it is poetic pregnancy.

Chatterton. Few poets have a chance to overfeed.

Chatterton.

Enter MRS. ANGELL.

Bertha. O father, you are cruel.

Mrs. Angell. [*To Burgum.*] Pardon, sir.

There is a gentleman below, who says
He must see you at once. Shall he come up?

Burgum. No, no: I 'll go to him.

Mrs. Angell. I 'll tell him so. [*Exit Mrs. Angell.*]

Burgum. He may bring news about the Pedigree.
[*To Bertha.*] Wait here; I shall return.

[*Exit Burgum.*]

Chatterton. [*Going to table.*] Fair advocate,
For your defence my thanks must be the fee.
You come from Bristol—is my mother well?

Bertha. I really do not know.

Chatterton. No, no, of course:
My head is heavy.

Bertha. O, you do need aid!

Chatterton. Perhaps; yet more I need another mind
That turns not giddy on this whirling sphere.
But that is naught to any one save me—
Who cares for Chatterton?

Bertha. There 's one at least:
One who beheld him roam the Bristol streets
Beset by dangers of a forward youth—
Misunderstood, unhappy; one who knows

Chatterton.

All that he must have suffered here from want,
From loneliness, and hopes unrealized ;
One who for him will offer up her prayers.

Chatterton. Have mercy, lady, do not make me weep.
You do not know me : I am harsh indeed.
I have a most unlucky way of raillery,
And when the fit of satire is upon me,
I spare nor friend nor foe. Your father 's duped.

Bertha. Why, then we shall be happier ; so 't is well.

Chatterton. Part of this wretchedness that seethes
within
Is due to damned, unconquerable pride,
And part from hot imagination flows.—
My brain 's afire.

Bertha. I pity you the more :
Imaginary woes are real to him
Whom they oppress, and hardest to dispel ;
And if you truly do deserve your fate,
Then have you more to bear.

Chatterton. You came in time ;
To-morrow—to-morrow might have been too late.

Bertha. My father soon will come, and I would ask—

Chatterton. My life, and it is yours.

Bertha. No, not your life ;
But that you nobly live.

Chatterton.

Chatterton. I 'll try, I 'll try.

Bertha. Give me some token ; let it be a verse
In your own hand.

Chatterton. I have none worthy you.

Bertha. Have you not one among your papers there ?
I know 't is much to ask.

Chatterton. No : it is yours.

[*Taking up a sheet of paper.*] On melancholy—that
will scarcely do.

Bertha. Read it to me, and I shall be the judge.

Chatterton. [*Reads.*]

When silent are the chambers of the mind
To rippling laughter and to whispering love,
When Hope hath whirled away, a mourning dove,
And bats dart in and out, and moans the wind,
Then Melancholy comes, to night consigned,
And haunts the moonlit windows. Perhaps above,
Not on this earth, can shadowy thoughts that rove
Like troubled ghosts a sweet oblivion find.

O like some cindered orb that shineth not,
Yet holdeth still its planets as a sun,
Is one burnt out by sorrow and o'erfraught
With that mute anguish of a life undone—
That sinking of the heart, that deadly thought
That all is lost and would be worthless won.

Chatterton.

[*Handing paper to her.*] I would that it were better.

Bertha. 'T is so sad.

Chatterton. I wrote it on the midnight of the day

I fell into a new-made grave.

Bertha. O, sir,

Yield not to gloom ; for you are rich in mind.

Of all the boons the Fates propitious grant

I 'd choose the golden branch of poesy.

Chatterton. Each man doth pay a price for what he has.

The very qualities of mind and heart

That make a poet make a sufferer.

The keenness of perception, which unfolds

A realm of beauty hid to other eyes,

Unmasks the world : shows him indifference

Behind the flimsy guise of courtesy,

The shallowness of friendship, the alloy

Of self, debasing charity to trade.

The vividness of his imagination,

Which, in a garret, gives him trees and flowers,

The cool salt sea and heaven's blue expanse,

Enlarges troubles, and creates such fears

He trembles at the possible in life.

The sensibility, which treasures up

Each word or look of kindness as a gem,

Makes bitterer the haughtiness of birth,

Chatterton.

The vulgar swelling of a pompous purse,
The slur, the slight, the mockery of fools.
Beyond he sees a spiritual sphere,
Where, by unselfishness, the terrible
Becomes a valued teacher—where the power
To wound through self is lost ; yet cannot reach it.
He is a medium through which all things speak :
The human passions wrack his nervous frame ;
Each thing in nature makes his heart its pulse.
Who would aspire to wear the laurel crown ?—
It is a crown of thorns ! [*Sinks back upon chair.*

Bertha. O you are faint from hunger !

Chatterton.

'T is not so :

A giddiness—be not afraid—'t will pass— [*Faints.*

Bertha. [*Going to him and raising his head.*]

O Chatterton, look up ! He 's dead ! He 's dead !

O world, behold your deed ! His eyelids move !

Chatterton. [*Recovering.*] 'T is gone. O I would
die to wake like this.

Bertha. I 'll get a glass of water. [*Goes to wash-
stand and brings water back.*] Here, drink this.

Chatterton. [*After drinking.*] I have these spells—
they are not serious.

Bertha. You are not well, you are not well.

[*An increasing noise outside is heard.*]

Chatterton.

Enter MRS. ANGELL *in great excitement.*

Mrs. Angell. Fly, Chatterton, fly ! fly !

Chatterton. Have you gone mad ?

Mrs. Angell. Fly ! Mr. Burgum swears he 'll murder
you—

He is enraged.

Chatterton. I would fly only one

Who had the power to extend my lease of life :

I am aweary of the premises.

Mrs. Angell. He 's foaming at the mouth.

Chatterton. Then let him foam.

Each petty wave upon the mighty sea

Foams at its pleasure—why not he ? I say

Then let him foam.

Enter BURGUM *in a fury.*

Burgum. [*Waving his cane.*] I 'll murder him !

Bertha. [*Interposing.*] You shall not harm him,
father.

Mrs. Angell. [*To Chatterton.*] Come away !

Chatterton. Nay ; he is harmless as a bottled bee :

He can but buzz.

Bertha. [*To Burgum.*] What is the matter, sir ?

Burgum. That knave ! that knave !—the pedigree is
false !

Chatterton.

What can you say, you villain?

Bertha.

He is ill.

Burgum. I care not for his illness, let him speak!—
You swindler, speak!

Bertha. You gave him but a crown.

Burgum. Peace, peace; or I shall drive you from the
room.

[*To Chatterton.*] Now answer me!

Chatterton. [*Rising.*] Were it not for your
age

And for your daughter whom I do respect,
I 'd answer not in words.

Bertha. O Chatterton!

Mrs. Angell. O gentlemen, I beg you both forbear.

Chatterton. [*To Bertha.*] Have no fear, lady; did
he bear a knife

To stab me here, I would not parry it,
If by such action I should frighten you.
Stand not between.

Burgum. In King's Bench you shall lodge!

Chatterton. Then I shall fatten at the town's ex-
pense.

Now, look you, Burgum, I 'll no more of this,
Unless the lady bid me, so take heed.
This room doth show my poverty and needs,

Chatterton.

Yet 't is my castle, sir !

Burgum. I am undone ;

And Bristol will clap hands upon her sides

And roar with mirth. Why did you dupe me so ?—

'T was not for money, for 't was but a crown.

Chatterton. 'T was not for money, or you should
have paid

A thousand crowns. You will remember, sir,

That when a pupil at the Bluecoat School,

Poor, lonely, friendless, with a thirst for lore,

I came to ask of you the loan of books,

You mocked my poverty, jeered at my verse,

And sneering bade me learn the cobbler's trade.

I knew your passion was for gold and birth ;

And gold you had. In bitter sport

I wrote your pedigree, scarce thinking it

Would be received with credence ; yet it was.

I should have told you then, but you did swell

And treat me with disdain. I tell you now

That, since you are the father of this girl,

I 'd give my life to undo what is done ;

Yet, were you not her father, I do swear

I 'd give my life to do it o'er again.

I made a fool of gold, for it had made

A fool of me so long.

Chatterton.

Burgum. The whole is false :
My ancestor was not of Norman blood,
And John de Bergham never lived at all.

Chatterton. He habited a world within a world—
This globe of fancy, where strange creatures live,
And all the business of existence moves
Unrecked of, as though on some distant orb.—
Thank heaven ! that, being a poet, he dwelt not here.

Burgum. [*Despairingly.*] What shall I do ?

Bertha. [*To Chatterton.*] Can nothing be con-
trived

By which my father may derision 'scape ?

Chatterton. [*To Burgum, after a thoughtful pause.*]
You are not known in London ; what is done
Will ne'er to Bristol come : you can give out,
Anent the pedigree, 't was all your joke.
Play your cards slowly, and with that same tact
With which you bargain for your tin and lead ;
And, sir, the game is yours.

Burgum. [*Chuckling.*] To turn the laugh
Upon the laughers—good—that is the trick.
Come, daughter, come.

Mrs. Angell. 'T is dark : I'll go before.

[*Exit Mrs. Angell followed by Burgum.*]

Bertha. Good-by.

Chatterton.

Chatterton. O lady, when I said good-by
To my dear mother on the cloudy night
I took the coach for London, I did feel
As though that word were fully charged with grief;
But 't was not so.

Bertha. O, sir, do not despair;
And should we never meet again, believe
My thoughts will ever wander back to you.

Chatterton. We shall not meet again.

Burgum. [*Calling from without.*] Come, Bertha.

Bertha. [*To Burgum.*] Yes!

[*To Chatterton.*] Why so?

Chatterton. If Barrett recommend me strong,
I sail for Africa as surgeon's mate.

Bertha. Indeed!—but then you will return.

Chatterton. Perhaps.

Bertha. I will not say good-by—good-night.

Chatterton. [*Kissing her hand.*] Farewell.

[*Chatterton sinks upon chair, his elbows resting
on table, his face upon his hands. Bertha
pauses at doorway, looks back pityingly, and
then goes out.*]

Chatterton. [*Raising his head.*]

Alone, again alone, yet more alone

Than e'er I was before. [*After a pause.*] The hope is vain.

Chatterton.

O there is consolation in the thought
That though a puppet in the hands of fate
A man is born and lives—made now a king,
And now, the sport for mocking enemies,
He has the power when evils hedge him round,
And joy and love and hope have fled for aye,
To laugh! ring down the drop, and end the play.

Enter MRS. ANGELL.

Mrs. Angell. Here is a letter, sir, that came to-day.
[*Hands letter to Chatterton.*

Chatterton. [*To himself.*] This is in Barrett's hand:
it seals my doom. [*Opens letter and reads to himself.*]

I cannot recommend you for the place
Of surgeon's mate—you know too little physic.

[*Tears up letter and throws pieces on floor.*

Mrs. Angell. Bad news?

Chatterton. Good news—a warrant for my death.

Mrs. Angell. How pale you look! but I have that
will bring

The color to your cheek. The lady begs
That you accept this as a loan.

[*Gives a purse to Chatterton.*

Chatterton.

Chatterton. She 's kind.

Heaven grant her happiness. [*Throwing up purse.*]

This yellow god

Distributes favors with a curious hand.

The kings of his creation are so low

Of forehead that their crowns sit on their eyebrows.

They have, for motley fools, wise men—so called

(Not wise enough to live within their age),

Who feed upon the bones their masters throw

Beneath the table. 'T is the voice of fate,

Exclusion's cruel law, that he who carries

In the clouds his head shall stumble on the earth.

Here, take the trash—I am no pauper yet.

[*Gives purse to her.*]

Mrs. Angell. [*Aside.*] The boy is surely crazed.

Chatterton. There, go at once.

I cannot, with these artificial words,

Show the brain busy, and keep out the thoughts

That knock to be admitted. No more—go!

Mrs. Angell. [*With emotion.*] I meant not to offend.

Chatterton. I am too rude.

I needs must take a tenderer farewell.

Mrs. Angell. Farewell? Why how you talk! You
will not leave?

Chatterton. I may, perhaps.

Chatterton.

Mrs. Angell. Where are you going, sir?

Chatterton. To sea ; but vex me not at present,
please ;

And, should my mother come to you, tell her
How hard I worked ; but 't was of no use—no use.

Good-by, dear Mrs. Angell. [*Kisses her.*]

Mrs. Angell. I 'll leave the lamp.

Chatterton. No : take it—'t is too brilliant.

[*Lights candle and hands lamp to her.*]

Mrs. Angell. You will feel

Much better in the morning.

Chatterton. Pray I may.

Mrs. Angell. [*Aside.*] I 'll ask my husband what is
best to do,

[*Exit Mrs. Angell with lamp. Lights lowered.*]

Chatterton. And should I reach ambition's goal at
last—

My brain would not hold out. Why, even now
I feel rebellion 'gainst the reason strong
And frenzy coming on. No, not that fate—
Confined within a mad-house ! there to sit,
Perchance for years—long years—with vacant stare
And slubber dripping from the fallen lip ;
Or with a maniac's eye to see such things
As hell doth not contain ; to hear loud shrieks

Chatterton.

And clanking chains—O God, not that, not that !

[*After a pause.*] I'll do it, and to-night.

[*Goes to door and locks it. The click of the lock is heard.*]

There Hope, stay out :

Come not to me when life is past recall.

[*Comes back to table.*] They shall not have the poems
which they spurned,

But Rowley shall with Chatterton expire.

[*Draws out box from under table, and takes out manuscripts.*]

O how these papers plead with me for life !

All my young thoughts and all my early dreams—

I cannot do it ! O I cannot do it !

[*Weeping, he lets his head fall upon his arm.*]

[*After a pause.*] Here fools may thrive ; and I—why
I lack bread.

[*Firmly.*] It must be thus.

[*Tears up papers, and throws pieces fluttering into the air.*]

O turn to white-winged gulls, and fly away :

This is no place for you. And now the end.

[*Takes a vial from his pocket.*]

I feel much calmer. [*Looking at vial.*] It is better
thus :

Chatterton.

A bullet tearing through my fevered brain
Seems so abhorrent to me. Yet 't is sad
To send this ghostly messenger to bid
My troubled heart be still—and then these hands,
These faithful, willing hands that even now
Obey me to the death.

*[Coarse laughter of a man and woman far off
in the street is heard.]*

What noise is that?

*[The ribalds come nearer and nearer, singing
the following song, with occasional bursts of
mirth. Chatterton goes to window, throws
open casement. The moonlight streams in.]*

Voices. [From street.]

Say'st thou it is a lawless love
That lusts within mine eye?
Know thou there is no lawless love
Beneath the love-lit sky.

Female Voice. I 'm out of tune ; give me another
drink. *[Laughter.]*

Both Voices. [Singing.]

Man maketh law, but Nature, love ;
And in the court above
Love 's cast for only fickleness—
But then it is not love.

Chatterton.

[*Laughter.*

[*Laughter and singing die away in the distance. Chatterton comes from window, laughs wildly, and then suddenly checks his mirth.*]

Chatterton. O, what an unction for the closing eye,
And what a chant to fill the parting ear !

[*A distant clock again strikes the hour.*

A signal ! be it so. [*Drinks poison.*] The deed is
done.

O, my poor mother !—peace, my anguished soul.
Have mercy, heaven, when I cease to be,
And this last act of wretchedness forgive.

[*A look of agony passes over his face ; he staggers to the bed and sinks upon his knees ; then he rises and speaks deliriously.*]

The coach !—

The coach is coming ! I can hear its wheels !
Good-by, my friends ; and mother, have no fear :
I shall succeed. I 'll write you all from London !

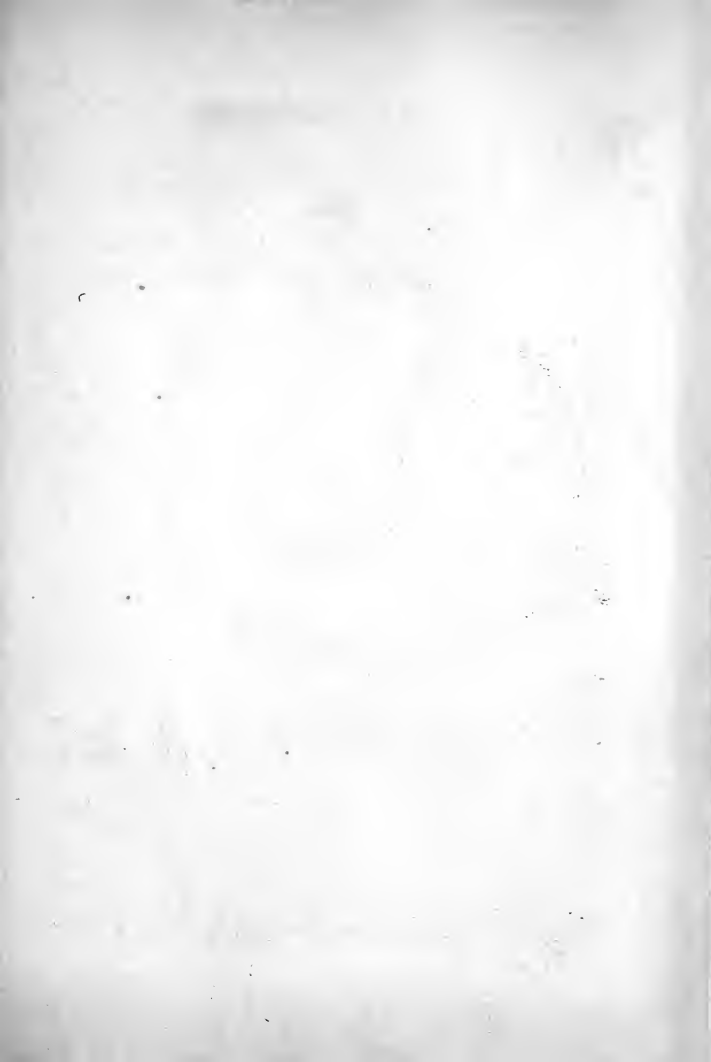
[*Falls in the moonlight upon the pieces of his manuscripts, and dies. Slow curtain. Curtain rises. Lights*

Chatterton.

up. It is morning. Chatterton is discovered lying on floor as before. A discussion among voices is heard without. Loud knocking.

*Mrs. Angell. [From without.] Mr. Chatterton !
[Knocking.] Mr. Chatterton ! [Knocking.] Mr. Chatterton !*

CURTAIN.





Rinaldo,
the
Doctor of Florence.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

RINALDO, *a young physician.*

TOMMASO ADIMARI, *a young nobleman.*

ANDREA, *servant to Rinaldo.*

FILIPPO, *servant to Tommaso.*

The HERMIT, *protector to ELENA.*

RICCARDO ADIMARI, *cousin to Tommaso.*

FREDERICO ADIMARI, *father to Riccardo.*

TORELLO, *a villager.*

TEDALDO, *a Florentine.*

A Priest.

A Poet.

A Philosopher.

BRUNO, }
PIETRO, } *Grave-robbers.*

ELENA, *a peasant girl.*

BELCOLORE, *mistress to Tommaso, and in time wife to*
Rinaldo.

PERONELLA, *an innkeeper.*

CATERINA, *wife to Torello.*

Villagers, Guests, Players, Musicians, Jugglers, Followers
of the Adimari, Servants, and other Attendants.

SCENE.—FLORENCE and its VICINITY.

RINALDO, THE DOCTOR OF FLORENCE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*A Street in a Village near Florence.*

Enter TOMMASO and FILIPPO.

Tommaso. She passes here, you said.

Filippo. And so I thought.

Tommaso. You must have had a reason so to think.

Filippo. My reason is that she did spend the night
Within the village, and to-day returns
To meet Rinaldo for a parting kiss.

Tommaso. In truth, this upstart goes to Florence, then?

Filippo. At your uncle's expense.

Tommaso. At my expense ;
For, has this illegitimate less skill
Than that by which Asklepios waked the dead,
He cannot keep the devil from his own

Rinaldo,

Nor me from my inheritance one year :
Therefore, at my expense.

Filippo. At your expense ;
But certainly his lordship looks much better.

Tommaso. Well, what of that ? Old age is a disease
Beyond the stop of surgery or physic ;
And my dear uncle has it most severe.

Filippo. But what gives strict consistency a twinge
Is that his lordship, at his time of life,
Who never was accounted generous—

Tommaso. Generous ! each penny 's registered by
him ;
Fondled with the affection of a parent ;
Put through a daily exercise in count ;
Before it is allowed to pass away,
The best of medical attendance has ;
And long is mourned with tearful lamentation.

Filippo. Some say, for meanness past he'll make
amends
By leaving this son-of-no-father rich—
Some, too, whose senses have become acute
By earing plots and nosing out abuses—
The same, my lord, that sniffed at your intent
To be an uncle to yourself and have
A cousin-son by your bewitching aunt.

The Doctor of Florence.

Tommaso. I never did admit that ; and so long
As accusation's proof confession lacks
There is a doubt to buoy character.

Filippo. Why, she herself confessed.

Tommaso. A truce to this.

A thousand golden florins have I not,
And my estates are full encumberèd.
My creditors, who did my youth cajole
To glory in a vaunting thriftlessness,
To which, with credit slack, they gave free scope,
Drew tether in when it was noised abroad
That I of my young aunt had been too fond.
The wind of this new rumor, that for this
My uncle has cut me off, hath made their love,
The weathercock of fortune, point due north,
And chilled their smiles to grins. Nor do I think
That of such magic parts I am possessed,
Whereof in fanciful romance we read,
That with a frown I can o'erthrow my foes,
Repay these usurers in my regard,
And let my gallantry air itself in rags.
I know, full well, the patience of the world
Is co-extensive with the sinner's purse ;
And, with my money and my prospects gone,
Its charitable "fast" will turn to "vicious ;"

Rinaldo,

Whilst these same clawed and ostrich-bellied men
Will have a stomach for my very bones.

Filippo. 'T is sure they will, my lord.

Tommaso.

That they may not,

Nor, with a gnawing hunger, I be left
The beggar's feast—the smell of the repast,
We must be doing ; for, though to myself
I have as yet admitted this as gossip
(Strangely, for fear concession give it substance),
Still have I ever had a well-fed dread
Rinaldo might supplant me in the will.

Filippo. I should not let him.

Tommaso.

How could you prevent ?

Filippo. 'T is easier than many harder things.

Tommaso. But make it easy, and I 'll make you rich.

Filippo. Why, challenge him.

Tommaso.

Remain poor as your wit.

Did but a single life stand in my way,
Your easy would be hard.

Filippo.

What is there else ?

Tommaso. There are more men in Florence than

Rinaldo ;

And, should he be by any means removed,
My uncle might another one select
Of some experience and penetration.

The Doctor of Florence.

Filippo. Rinaldo is no fool, though I have heard
His father was a noble.

Tommaso. Yes, a White,
Who the plebeian mother did desert
When she did pregnant prove. She died of grief
(Whence comes their love-child's melancholy mien),
Yet, when the lecher did an exile die,
The commons sainted him ; while I by them,
For unevincèd fault, must be accurst.

Filippo. And disinherited : sweet poverty !

Tommaso. And disinherited most likely, too ;
For everything, my uncle to appease,
I have in order tried : attended mass ;
Did penance for my sins ; kept meekly silent ;
Then wrote to him (admitting just enough
To give denial color) that his wife
Distracted was when she the sin confessed—
“Heaven be my witness !”—but to no effect.

Filippo. Unnatural uncle !

Tommaso. Be that as it may ;
Should this low mongrel to my rights succeed,
I will be his successor. To that end,
We must Rinaldo from Elena wean.
First, as I have a passion for the girl,
Which heats the very marrow, boils the blood,

Rinaldo,

And fires imagination so at times,
I'd miss the rest to satiate my love.
Then, should they wed, my overtures to her,
Which now for fear of strife she from him hides,
Would turn him fiercely 'gainst my every hope,
And, on his death, all would devolve on her.
Instead, I must be his sole devisee,
Executor, and legatee. This done—

Filippo. This done, he's done: you will provoke a
quarrel?

Tommaso. Not so: I shall not toll the Martinella,
But crush him as did Florence Fiesole.

Filippo. The words run smoothly but the acts may
trip.

In brief, the plan doth seem most weak in this:
'Tis strong but in your adversary's weakness.

Tommaso. Then is it strong indeed; for he's a dolt—
An equalizer whose own rank doth fix
The level of his communistic sea—
One of those railers 'gainst the nobility,
That from the Ambona ventilate their lungs,
Or in a balmy arbor tune their harps,
And sing, in catching numbers, humble worth.
Bah! throw a title to one of this stamp,
He will devour it like the starving dog

The Doctor of Florence.

That strives to swallow, at one gulp, the beef
Flung to him by a charitable hand.
He hates the commons, too, and curses them.
He is a cross between the two extremes
And of the qualities of each partakes :
I am no prophet if I find the lown
Less greedy for the fruit of birth and fame
Than he is prompt to scoff them.

Filippo. But he knows

Your reputation and your last amour.

Tommaso. He then has less to learn. I mean by that,
The worst being known, disclosure has no fang.
I shall try once again to win the girl ;
And, gain or lose, then to inveigle him.

Filippo. To win the girl would be to win his hate.
Beware both edges of a two-edged sword ;
Note that a ready knowledge marks the thief ;
That slanders, like the wasps, bear stings behind ;
That liars to you will about you lie ;
Nor let a foe bruise your shin to stub his toe.

Tommaso. He will deem me his preserver. By the
saints !

I think he would not give a maid the ring,
If idle rumor did asperse her fame,
Though he did know her chaste. A good point this

Rinaldo,

Should she unruly act ; one hard to meet ;
For, in some minds so delicately framed,
The most unlikely scandal, given breath,
Attaints what they adore, and leaves a stain
That provèd innocence cannot expunge.
She is an orphan ; with the Hermit lives ;
He has a lusty body for his years :
This Michael Scott may have taught her in love
While he her lover did instruct in physic.
I'll con the matter further.

Filippo.

But—

Tommaso.

No more

Of finding “buts” and “might-bes” in the scheme.
It is the only one we have to choose,
And that 's a virtue in it : so to work.
Have you the tables spread as I directed ?

Filippo. Alas ! my lord ; and paid the ringing coin ;
For, though I was not bluntly trust refused,
Beneath the giving surface of excuse,
I felt denial's firmness ; which, covered o'er,
Would have no more been yielding to my suit,
Had I a pressure obstinate maintained
And forced a contact.

Tommaso.

What we must, we must :

And, to secure the rabble's vulgar mouth,

The Doctor of Florence.

We must its belly fill.

Filippo. But what puts salt upon my bleeding heart
Is the disparity 'twixt purse and maw.

Tommaso. Well, let them gorge while food is plentiful:
To hell their favor when I need it not.
I shall myself invite them to the tables ;
See that—but here the lady comes ; begone !

Filippo. [*Exit singing.*]

“ I own the broadest land :
My blood,” said the lord, “ is blue.”
Then may blue blood be damned :
The king's-evil 's eating you.

Tommaso. A glibness of the tongue, if it strike in,
Is fatal : if he useless should become,
Let him avoid a chill.

Enter ELENA.

Sweet maid, one word.

Elena. My lord !

Tommaso. Your slave ! more subject than your hand ;
Whose rank and fortune, in the light of love,
Fade like the stars i' the radiance of the sun.

Elena. My lord ! oh, let me pass !

Rinaldo,

First Villager. If her mouth can only hold out against the siege of our understanding, her wit will succor it betimes.

Third Villager. Let her alone. How does Rinaldo take it?

Caterina. You should see him strut. I remember his mother, the prude ; no one in the village good enough for her ; she would a lord.

Torello. Alas for those who do you a favor, my dear ; they incur your undying enmity. Rinaldo has been very kind to us ; and, if one must answer for his parents' slips, woe be to those that follow this generation.

Fourth Villager. He cured me of the megrims.

Second Villager. And me of the itch, which kept me scratching like an old hen with a brood of young chickens.

Caterina. A woman pretender could do that. You are as big a dolt as Andrea, who has placed his life to the credit of Rinaldo's account, to be drawn on at pleasure, for two or three drinks of hippocras and as many huge words, each large enough to bear off a dozen tomtit souls. Rinaldo is a monster like his lordly father. He dressed my dog's wound ; but afterward, when the poor animal, in pure gratitude, followed at his heels, he gave the brute such a yerk behind that Ajax ran and yelped and howled.

The Doctor of Florence.

First Villager. She has declared war because of a dog.

Torello. The Hermit says—

Caterina. Another one of those nameless men, come from Pavia, Padua, Genoa or Venice—the Lord only knows! Kept to himself until he met Rinaldo; not much of a hermit now. They say that he was disappointed in love. Poor love! no scapegrace but fell through love. In mercy's name, how long does the disease last? Perhaps, if everything were known, he would not escape hanging. Elena, poor girl, had better watch these quacks. She is forbid by my young master to lead up a dance; she must needs act like a cloistered lady.

Torello. The only one in the village, my love, you do not censure.

Caterina. Censure? I censure no one. Here comes a villain that could tickle you on the ribs, and, when you opened your mouth to laugh, pour poison down your throat.

Filippo. [From without, singing.]

Torello's wife is an ugly wench:

Oh, how'd she come to catch 'im?

She may thank her lucky stars that apes

Have other apes to match 'em.

Caterina. He means us, my dear.

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Caterina. He means us, my dear.

Rinaldo,

Enter FILIPPO.

Now, Filippo, what fresh insult is this?

Filippo. None, most virtuous madam, none. By my grandfather's honor (who was wed at the rapier's point, and who was charged by certain ill-disposed persons with being a cutpurse—his hand having mistaken its road and got into their pockets), I swear, no insult was intended. He that speaks truth insults only the devil; and who should cry "hold!" when the devil is be-deviled? Dear madam, you are taking upon yourself the devil's quarrel.

Caterina. Who ever heard the devil's imp speak truly? You sneaking, lecherous knave, I know you well.

Filippo. Not half so well as you might know me were you younger.

Caterina. I never was so young as to be duped by such a filthy rogue, and I am old enough to know your history.

Filippo. The world's history, sweet antediluvian; you were temptation to my great-grandsire. Who knows but that you put the lechery in our blood? The globe is a slippery place for man to walk upon, and that good, ancient gentleman may have had his fall. I doubt the correctness of my genealogical map if he had not.

The Doctor of Florence.

Caterina. Impudent scoundrel ! I'll let this stick have its fall on your pate.

Filippo. Put up the staff ; words are our weapons ; we'll fight as fairly as two bucks.

Caterina. I will not bandy words with you, who trace descent through scores of libertines.

Filippo. Lord, Lord, that I should see the day ! Take away my sense of touch, my eyes, my ears, my palate and my nose ; that I may not feel slimy man, nor hear his vulgar speech, nor see his rascal features, nor taste, nor smell this bitter, noisome world ; but live within myself—an ego egotistically confined. Here comes his virgin lordship. Farewell ; the devil's imp must give place to the devil. *[Exit Filippo.]*

Caterina. He has rightly named his master.

Enter TOMMASO.

Tommaso. Good people, one and all, it gives me joy to see you joyful on this bright May day. Nature has donned her gayest gown, and joins in the merrymaking. But what is beauty to an empty stomach ? The stomach is the pampered favorite of the heart, the head, and all our several parts—the patron of sociability. If we have any suit to these, his smile ensures an audience and success. That we may win his favor, I have prepared a

Rinaldo,

little bribe in shape of fowls, cold and roasted ; loins of meat ; stuffed pigs, with wine and relishes ; and other things acceptable to this, our friend at court.

Caterina. I think he has reformed.

Tommaso. If you will follow me, I'll verify my words.

Caterina. Come on, Torello, or the gluttons will get there first.

First Villager. I do not like him, and will not go.

Third Villager. Nor do I like him, but I like his food. Come ; eat your enemy's bread, and then, by the strength it gives you, cut his throat : thus do you make him an accessory to his own murder, and have a twofold revenge. Come along.

[*Exit Tommaso, followed by Villagers. Enter*

Elena ; enter Rinaldo ; the Angelus rings ; they pause in an attitude of devotion.

Elena. Rinaldo !

Rinaldo. You are before me ; am I late ?

Elena. Oh, no ; not very late.

Rinaldo. Not very late

Is still too late for one to call it promptness.

Elena. I was myself detained ; for as I came To meet you here, a villager I passed,
Poor soul ! who even on this holiday
Is forced to spin. She looked so longingly

The Doctor of Florence.

For kindly heed ; and I could not refuse
What was so eager sought and cost so little.
Oh that I could with one pure, golden wish
Make every poor, deserving mortal rich !

Rinaldo. You would enrich but few. Did every one
His judgment in each separate act obey,
Nor juggle facts, his conscience to deceive,
How many paupers, think you, would there be ?
Believe me, too, Elena, that you waste
Compassion on these creatures, deeming them
Like to yourself in their position placed :
They are mere crabs, bloodless, ambitionless ;
Which suffer less, being crushed, than you in pity.

Elena. You are my own Rinaldo ! speaking ill,
And ever doing good ; but I 'll not hark,
Old cynic, to advice the adviser shuns.

Rinaldo. I would not that a crab should useless
suffer ;
But do not sow, nor counsel you to sow,
All expectation in the sterile soil
Of this world's gratitude.—Who does, reaps pain :
For those most sensitive to others' woe
Feel most the wound a thankless heart inflicts ;
And unrequited charity oft makes
A whole life miserable. No, Elena :

Rinaldo,

Enter HERMIT.

I find more pleasure in the stars, the trees,
The grass, the flowers, than in all else, save you.
Nature is not an ingrate, and she lacks
Antagonistic passions, which disturb,
When in another seen, and which arouse
The baseness in ourselves. In her calm presence,
With animal propensity inert,
And incorporeal spirit winging free,
We near the angels. I would that you—
But here are age and wisdom : let them speak.

Hermit. Howe'er with other people it may be,
To stir my soul's deep sensibilities,
There must be, in the object of its love,
A sympathetic heart. Know thou that prat'st
Of loving, more devoutly than mankind,
Nature's inanimate forms, the noblest love
That man can feel is for his fellow-man.
Him canst thou cheer when self-respect and hope
Have left him like a wreck upon the sands ;
And if, in all thy days, thou hast done naught
But fill one life with joy, thou hast done well.
But what for senseless nature canst thou do ?
With bounteous hand she gives, but ne'er receives.

Rinaldo. Ay, father, gives us of her beauty ever.

The Doctor of Florence.

Hermit. Cold is her beauty, for it lacks the glow
Of affection's gentle warmth. Sublimely pure,
Unpitying and passionless she moves,
Majestic in her known eternity.
From laws unvarying, which gave us birth
And shaped our being to conform with them,
Her seeming cruelty and justice spring ;
And all we see, in her e'er-changing looks,
Of rage or sympathy is but our own
Reflection. He that her chaste image paints
True to its stern simplicity will live
Immortal as his race ; for, like the clouds,
Emotion comes and goes ; while reason bides,
Changeless as the blue firmament beyond.
But to the heart impassioned by the thought
Of friends departed or of those that soon
Must be shut up forever in the grave—
O'er whom the snow shall drift, the chill winds sweep,
Till those dear features moulder into dust—
What consolation is the flowery scene ?
The ceaseless roaring of the mighty deep ?
One speaks the ending ; one, the evermore.
'T is not until the deeper faculties
Themselves exhaust by suffering acute,
That nature, with her varied loveliness,

Rinaldo,

An audience in the cooler senses finds.
Oh, in such time of anguish, or when we
Lie helpless on the solemn bed of death,
Aware nor friends, nor courage, nor appeal—
Nor anything that has availed through life
Can save from that inevitable fate ;
Naught, naught that lies without the realms of hope
Can so console the spirit, or can throw
Such holy radiance round our dying hour
As those unselfish acts by which we strove
To raise the sum of human happiness.

Rinaldo. I know, I know, good father ;
Your words sound well enough, mean well enough,
And would, perhaps, be practical in heaven.

Hermit. Oh, deem not everything impractical
That is of heaven.—You leave to-day, I hear.

Rinaldo. I momentarily expect Andrea
To say the horses are in readiness.

Hermit. His lordship has been very kind, Rinaldo.

Rinaldo. He owes me something for my skill and time.

Hermit. But is no less entitled to thy thanks.
Some persons freely give, who will not pay ;
That it is due, ennobles oft the deed.
But I am starting on another strain—
Andrea goes along ?

The Doctor of Florence.

Rinaldo. He would not stay.

A more devoted servant does not live.

Hermit. He is a worthy lad, and loves thee much.

Elena and myself shall miss you both ;

But thy success will solace loneliness,—

And I am confident thou wilt succeed,

And honor by excelling me, my son.

Rinaldo. Each hamlet has its genius cribbed by fortune ;

Youthful promise doth rare materialize.

Hermit. True : that the many fail makes critics safe

In damning all that 's new ; yet would I not

Such critics emulate ; I 'd rather err

In prophesying greatness.

Rinaldo. You might work

A double injury.

Hermit. An injury ?

Rinaldo. Discount the future, and we rob surprise,

And make achievements fair as bankrupts show.

Hermit. He should not climb that seeks for fleshly food :

The sheltered valleys teem with fruitfulness,

Easy of access ; whilst the weathered peaks

That top a rough and dangerous ascent

Are barren to the lower appetite.

Rinaldo,

But I must hasten to a sick man's bed :
Time moves but slowly 'twixt the doctor's calls.
Farewell, my son. I'll keep Elena safe,
As I have done since her good father died.
When thou returnest for her, I shall be
Reluctant to make transfer. Fare thee well.—
When reason falters, let love's impulse guide.

[*Exit Hermit.*]

Rinaldo. Bless him for going !

Elena. He is so wise and good.

Rinaldo. Who trifles with his own time is a fool ;
Who trifles with mine, a knave.

Elena. He means us well.

Rinaldo. Some humanity far too general is
Ever to reach the individual.

Elena. Fy, fy, when he has done so much for us.

Rinaldo. Blasted be the man that lies in ambush
For a theme on which to moralize—
Head a-bobbing, eyes strained, ears extended ;
Falling on an unsuspecting sentence,
Timid word, or innocent occurrence
With a self-exhilarating whooping ;
Riddling it with oft-remoulded weapons
From the wordy armory of morals ;
Tearing with a zest its ragged garments ;

The Doctor of Florence.

Mutilating, mocking, not desisting,
Till he sights another in the distance.
Why, such a man sees tenderness in snakes,
Gracefulness in a hippopotamus,
Hears music in a swine sucking and grunting
Over his swill. If you by chance complain,—
“I wish I had not such a heavy cold ;”
“You should be thankful it is not the plague.”
Or if—“It always rains when I would out ;”
“Reproach not all-designing Providence.”
And then there follows such a swarm of words
That liver, heart, and everything within
Swear like a bevy of imprisoned troopers.
Though his advice be good and what you seek,
He gives such a huge, unpalatable dose,
You fain would throttle him for giving it.
Well, well, I ’ll stop ; for very much I fear
That, like the carping censors of the time,
I paint the picture of a driveling fool,
And then unconsciously act out the portrait.
So let us to our own concerns, and be
As heedless of the world as ’t is of us.

Elena. Oh, do you love me much, Rinaldo ?

Rinaldo. Why !

Elena. I know you do, and still am not content

Rinaldo,

With knowledge of your love : I must have word
And tribute from your heart to show it mine.
I know that in the viol music lurks,
And yet, unplayed, there is no melody.
If you should tell me that I was most dear
A thousand times, each time would grow more sweet.
A woman can not live on reason's fruit :
She pines for daily tokens from the love
That life's more weighty actions prove within.
A frown no deeper than a passing cloud
Will dusk her brightest joy ; a sunny smile
Dispels the mists that gather in her way.—
You kissed me only once when we did meet.

Rinaldo. Then should my power of kissing be annulled ;

For 't is a franchise that non-use should forfeit :

Therefore, I 'll make amends.

[*Kisses her.*

I do seem cold ;

But I have seen so much of flattery ;
Of ostentatious slabbering o'er those
For whom the slightest fondness is not felt ;
Of these chameleons, which change their hue
To match the color of that on which they feed,—
That in my temper a repugnance lies
To laying bare my heart. The first display,

The Doctor of Florence.

In warmth of feeling made, is nipped by shame,
Draws in its head, and closes up its shell.

Elena. I oftentimes wish you more demonstrative ;
But tell myself that, were you otherwise,
You would not be Rinaldo : but perhaps
You would think more of me were I less loving.

Rinaldo. No ; judge not what I like by what I do :
A person mannered like myself would be
Intolerable company to me.
Be as you are ; you could not please me better.

Elena. Then am I happy, being as I am ;
For to please you my every effort aims ;
And when some new accomplishment I seek,
'Tis but to make me worthy of your love.
I have but one ambition in this life,
And that ambition yours. In each great mind
Some lower faculty finds its employ
In gaining for the higher sustenance ;
So do I, a part of you, my calling find
In caring for your wants.

Rinaldo. You underrate
Your mental qualities : they would adorn
An office of more yield and dignity ;
They need but self-esteem to lend them strength.

Elena. How glad I am to have you tell me this !

Rinaldo,

At times I 've wondered what you saw in me
To make you choose me from the whole, wide world.
Mayhap, when you have had the social scope
That greatness gives, and have fair ladies seen
In conversation's art and manners skilled,
Of rank and fortune and high education,
My humble station and unschoolèd ways
Will in comparison so lowly seem,
That, though by duty held, you will regret
You matched so early.

Rinaldo. What a foolish thought !

Elena. If you should truant prove, I should lose
faith

Almost in God himself.

Rinaldo. Do you not trust me ?

Elena. I trust you as I do mine eyes, on whose
Veracity I hourly stake my life.

Rinaldo. Then shall I be as faithful to the trust
As those dear eyes. For know, my loving girl,
I have an eye that weeps, but weeps in secret ;
A heart that feels, but suffers in constraint ;
A surface fickle as the wind-rid waves,
Beneath, a current constant as the depths.
To struggle 'gainst its native flow would be
An endless strife and hopeless misery.

The Doctor of Florence.

Elena. I do not doubt you : 't is my perfect faith,
Secure from everything that now exists,
Which questions of the possible its worst
To break or flaw.

Rinaldo. Till I disloyal grow,
Retain this locket ; you will find within
My sweet, wronged mother's face, and also mine
Where once my father's cruel visage was.
It has more power to move me than the ring
That symbols kingly will—Andrea comes.

Elena. I 'll wear it near my heart, but not in fear.

Enter ANDREA.

Andrea. The gentlemen who ride with us are waiting.

Rinaldo. Then must we go.

Elena. Rinaldo !

Rinaldo. Weep not, my love ;
Florence is not so very far away ;
We shall see each other often ;—come, cheer up.

Elena. Rinaldo, dear, I cannot let you go.
A dog howled all last night ; and there 's a dread
I cannot quell ;—stay but until to-morrow.

Rinaldo. 'T would be the same to-morrow as to-day.

Elena. 'T will give me time for waking.

Rinaldo. If you do part from me, I part from you.

Rinaldo,

Elena. Oh, one departing feels less grief than they
That see him go.

Rinaldo. Be brave.

Elena. I will be brave.
Good-bye, Andrea ; tend Rinaldo well ;
See that he does not jeopardize his health
By doing what to others he forbids.

Andrea. I shall, my mistress, for his sake and yours.

Elena. I know you will. Good-bye, Rinaldo.

Rinaldo. Quick !
Least time, least sting ; I 'll write you how I prosper.

[*Kisses her, and starts to go.*
Look ! look ! Andrea : see, through yonder rift
The sunlight streams upon our path—farewell—
'T is a blest omen ; let the curs howl on.

[*Exeunt Andrea and Rinaldo. Elena sinks
upon a seat ; Rinaldo returns ; kisses
her ; and then departs.*

The Doctor of Florence.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*Florence. A Room in Rinaldo's House.*

Enter ANDREA.

Andrea. My master's wondrous changed !
For many months he has not been himself :
He mutters strangely ; cries out in his sleep ;
Is fierce at times, and then again is kind.
Whene'er I speak of her, he sighs and frowns ;
And never bids me tell of those old times,
Which once he loved so much to have rehearsed.
Only his palate to his breeding's true.
The wealth the old lord left him and his fame
Have made him giddy.—Yet he was not so
Before Tommaso's coming. I suspect
Some cunning villainy : I half believe
That the assassin, from whose deadly knife
Tommaso saved Rinaldo, was a tool
To force his grace : else had the knave been slain.
What man would seek to end my master's days,
Who is so generous to those in want ;
Whose slightest self-neglect the wealthy chide,

Rinaldo,

Well knowing that his life prolongs their own?
I cannot see it clearly, but all 's wrong.

Enter TOMMASO and FILIPPO.

Tommaso. What are you doing here?

Andrea. My business, sir.

Tommaso. A saucy answer.

Filippo. He deserves a cuff.

Andrea. Keep off your hands, Filippo; I should not
Allow your better's blow to go unpaid.

Tommaso. We shall see about this.

Andrea. If you would see all,
Look with more than with your eyes, my lord:
For, in this world of jugglery, who sees
No more than do his eyes behold is blind,
And sport for tricksters.

Tommaso. By heaven, the drudge is turned philoso-
pher!

If from this class philosophy recruit,
Our laundress will write dissertations on
The immortality of grease on clothes,
And prove the doctrine pithy by her work;
Our groom will spend his time in framing saws
To jingle in the ears of evilness,
While on our horse's back each lash will leave

The Doctor of Florence.

A streak of dust. Our cook will catch the craze :
We shall have, for breakfast, Socrates on toast ;
For dinner, Aristotle nicely browned,
With Aristippus and Diogenes ragout,
And draughts of sweet Democritus, to make
Digestion good ; for supper, Plato boiled
And sliced up cold that we may have chaste dreams.
A windy diet this for hungry men !—
Go, sirrah, tell your master I am here. [*Exit Andrea.*]

Filippo. What did the rascal's speech imply ?

Tommaso. Oh, nothing :

A fool may state an isolated truth
With a surprising shrewdness, but he lacks
The plot and continuity of thought
To make him wise or dangerous. He meant
But what he said, and said it to be pert.

Filippo. By Jove, a thrust at me.

Tommaso. Which should be heeded.

Filippo. Which should be parried, sir.

Tommaso. Well, as you list ;

For I have now no time for foolery.
But take your cues, and you shall broadcloth wear,
Have silken sheets and coverlets of fur,
And eat three courses of nine different meats.
If I can get him married and then killed,

Rinaldo,

All that he has is mine ; and I shall have
Elena to myself—till she do age.

Filippo. Why marry him ?

Tommaso. I cannot otherwise

Stop his returning to Elena's love :

I've had Herculean task to check so long

His piddling pity ; and it will present

An opportunity to shape the will.

If that hope fail to blossom, then his wife,

By right of her relationship, will take.

Through her the property will come to me ;

For, with her frailty, she's as fond of me

As is the devil of a stumbling saint.

Filippo. What did my lady Belcolore say ?

Tommaso. Were he a hunchback or an impotent,

She'd be his sister-wife : I bring her note

Accepting his proposal. Tell her not

I seek Elena, or her jealousy

Would ruin all.

Filippo. Should he discover her ?

Tommaso. He shall not : but she is of noble birth ;

And there are few outside Verona's walls

That know her as my leman. I will shut,

With fairy promises, Riccardo's mouth ;

And my dear cousin has himself a grudge.

The Doctor of Florence.

Filippo. But should he wed, and live a score of years?

Tommaso. He shall not be long-lived : trust me for that.

But what a route circuitous to take
To come upon my own ! I merit all :
The artisans that with their licensed lights,
Like fire-flies flashing, nightly go to toil
On the Cathedral, gain their paltry pay
By lesser labor than I shall have had
To earn what should have been unearned mine.
My hours of wakefulness are full of schemes,
Which during sleep the murderers of rest,
Uneasy dreams, distort. I wake in fright
To plan again. I have self-knowledge thumbed,
In search of arguments that might appeal
To aspiration, pride, or avarice :
My web is woven, when there comes a broom,
And, like the spider, I must weave anew.
But I may prize it more when once obtained.
Let us withdraw ; I must see him alone. [*Exeunt.*

Enter RINALDO.

Rinaldo. When night and solitude together blend
In solemn stillness, and to the calm mind
Come melancholy thoughts, one is transformed.

Rinaldo,

Above his fellow-men he doth arise,
And views their strife in all its littleness.
Ambition leaves him : wealth, undying fame,
The highest place by man e'er yet attained,
The joy of love, and friendship true—all seem
Poor quittance for the struggles of a life.
With vividness appalling, comes this thought :
Unchangeable as the past, the mortal play
Is wholly writ ; and in the part unread
There is a scene of gloom in which I am
A dying man—a scene I must enact :
The time, the place, the circumstances all,
Unknown ; yet fixed with awful certainty.

Enter TOMMASO.

Tommaso. Still with dull company, I see.

Rinaldo. Is 't you?

Tommaso. Ay, with good news ; but you must doff
those looks,

And cease soliloquizing : 't is a sign
Of weakness when a part, unbidden, moves :
It shows an insurrection 'gainst the will
That may in time to a rebellion grow.
Who ever heard that Roman heroes moped,
Or wasted time conversing with themselves?

The Doctor of Florence.

Rinaldo. I know some ever bear a fearless front :
Breasting the surges of contending fortunes
With resolution stern, which baffles thought
In picturing what they could not endure ;
Yet doubtless there are times, Tommaso, when,
Behind the stroke and lineaments of courage,
The bravest spirit trembles—awed, it may be,
By comparative appraisement of itself ;
For, to the mind untrammelled by conceit,
Possessing power and vividness of vision,
There is a terror in the immensity
Of its environment. A million years !
Where is the patriot's country, which he dreams,
With a delusive vagueness, will exist
Through time unending ? where are they,
The brawling politicians, who declaim,
And make in speech a plaything of " forever " ?

Tommaso. Blest is the man that forms his own horizon !
You should have been a poet—not a doctor—
And gained your bread delivering the muse,
And physicking her weaklings. Come, now, come ;
Be bright and beaming as a bridegroom should.

Rinaldo. I have a malady incurable.

Tommaso. [*Eagerly.*] What malady ?

Rinaldo. A heart by nature sad.

Rinaldo,

Tommaso. Tush ! I can cure you.

Rinaldo. If there were a drug

That would benumb my sensibilities ;
Make me to see, to feel, to aspire as some—
Confer a boorish happiness, I would,
For dose sufficient, yield those attributes
That the unthinking covet, knowing not
The burden they impose.

Tommaso. I make no charge, except to charge you
this :

Associate not so much with yourself.
As those that choose life-partners like themselves
By marrying kin, have children doubly weak
Wherein both parents, being like, have lacked ;
And seldom strong e'en in parental strength :
So man, in solitude, availing not
Of others' force, his feebleness to mend ;
Nor of their failings, to afford a field
For exercise of virtues, soon becomes
A sickly offspring of monotony. [*Takes out a letter.*
Now for the prescription.—Read this o'er
Three times a day. I know that it is sweet,
For I beheld the lady writing it.
Her rosy lips, in silent unison
With her white hand, were moved—not as yours are

The Doctor of Florence.

When you are scrawling knots: you breathe aloud,
And squirm, and twist your mouth askew, like one
That reaches but the boundary of an itch.
Hers did appear to fondle every word,
As 't were a little god with golden wings
About to fly. There, touch it daintily.

[*Gives the letter to Rinaldo.*

[*Aside.*] We shall see how my composition fares;
I spent a lengthy hour inditing it.

[*To Rinaldo.*] So brief; or is the eye so swift?—

Love's eye,
Which travels over the endearing page,
First, as a courier, with mind on haste;
Next, as a merchant, viewing speed and gain;
Then, as a troubadour, not recking time.
With your permission, sir. [*Takes the letter.*

How does it start?

The greeting by a host, a sip of wine,
The opening of a letter, tell the tale.

[*Reads.*] "*How shall I address you? Propriety and Love, only in marriage reconciled, struggle to dictate the words. Did they concur, still how, when language cannot bear the weight of my affection? Yet, dear Rinaldo, the sweetest name of names, I must somehow make commencement. 'Will I be yours?' Why ask me that, when*

Rinaldo,

I am yours already? Why ask me that, when, were I so disposed, I could not say you nay? Ask only"—

Rinaldo. I sent Andrea after you too late.

Tommaso. Then thank the stars more than your own design

That I made off so fast.

Rinaldo. Tommaso, I repent me of this act.

Could I recall the letter that I wrote

Elena and that to Belcolore sent,

I would not do such violence to my soul—

No; not again, for Alderotti's fame

And Corso's sister's hand.

Tommaso. Beware, my friend,

An action's reflux, sweeping to the sea

Of vain regret. Exertion has, like cups,

Enervating reaction; joy foreseen

Is realized as an inheritance

Anticipated by advancements; benefits

Of plans embraced show in possession poor;

The sure defects exaggerate the worth

Of schemes dismissed, and in the contrast loom

Gigantic evils: hence the under-tow.

You may desire the sun to be a square,

But it remains an orb: society

Will, in your greatness, overlook your birth,

The Doctor of Florence.

But not your wife's. A prince weds not for love,
But for the weighty interests of the state :
A man of genius owes it to the world
To plume, not clip, his pinions by alliance.

Rinaldo. I try to keep the subject from my thoughts.
I have too far proceeded to retreat ;
Nor will I prod the ground before each step,
But, casting hesitation's staff aside,
Plunge on at risk, emboldened by my fear.

Tommaso. A very wise resolve.

Rinaldo. It throttles conscience. [*Rings a bell.*]

Enter ANDREA.

Andrea, fetch my cloak ; I must attend
One of the Cerchi wounded in a fray.

Tommaso. It is too late ; is 't not ?

Rinaldo. Pain still is stirring.

Tommaso. Were he of the Donati, go.

Rinaldo. He feels.

Tommaso. He is a murderous White.

Rinaldo. Think you I save
The lives I do for their intrinsic worth ?
'T were better nine of every ten were lost.
No, nor for reputation's sake : to heal
Becomes an instinct. Follow me, Andrea.

Rinaldo,

[*To Tommaso.*] I'll see you in the morning.

[*Exeunt Rinaldo and Andrea.*]

Tommaso. There goes a man "as round as Giotto's sample"—

An empty rim ; but, were he not a dolt,
He would not, pup-like, bite his tail and squeal,
As I have made him do ; nor would permit
A parasite to eat him. So content :
Fools must be borne, or rogues must change their
bent. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A Road Leading to Florence.*

Enter HERMIT and ELENA.

Hermit. Let us rest here awhile.

Elena. I am not tired.

Hermit. Thou must be so ; for we have traveled far,
And thou art not in health.

Elena. I can not find
In waiting any rest : desire goes on,
And, like dream-labor, wears my body more
Than would performance real. But you are old,
And I must have more patience.

Hermit. My dear child,
We shall, I fear, reach Florence soon enough.

The Doctor of Florence.

Elena. O, father, do not doubt him. I am sure
He never penned those words : Tommaso's hand,
In Paris trained, has forged the characters ;
Or my Rinaldo wrote in jest ; or else
To try my faith in him. Mistrustful boy !
To deem that I could ever question you.
My heart would give my senses all the lie,
Did they bear witness 'gainst my own true love.
Why, he is all that death has left to me.

Hermit. Whatever happens, daughter, I shall be—

Elena. Forgive me, father, for my thoughtlessness.
How could I for a moment fail to think
Of all that you have done !

Hermit. There, there, my child.
Now we shall journey on ; I did but stop
That you might be refreshed.

[*They resume their journey.*]

Elena. How we shall laugh,
Good father, at your fears ; and he will say :
“ Elena knew me far too well to doubt ;
Elena could not be deceived.” But we
Must be alone ; for he is distant when
Another person's by. Then you will come,
And laugh with us ; and we shall be so happy !

Hermit. I pray it may be so. [Exeunt.]

Rinaldo,

SCENE III.—*Florence. A Room in Rinaldo's House.*

Enter TOMMASO and RICCARDO.

Riccardo. I consent to keep secret my knowledge of Belcolore, and to treat her as her birth may countenance. Nor do I ask admission to your councils ; I would rather be free from entanglement, that, if you trick me in the result, I can the better check you.

Tommaso. You may rely upon my honor.

Riccardo. I never trust a man upon his honor. Honor is too indefinite and changeable a substance—too plastic, in a pinch, to reason—to be confided in. I prefer to rely upon a necessity of his being honest.

Tommaso. Then rely upon the necessity ; for the exiles from Florence and Arezzo have less incentive to consort and conspire than we have to act in unison.

Riccardo. Ay ; until the end is gained.

Tommaso. And after, too, that we may enjoy in security the rewards of our labor.

Riccardo. I'll make it so.

Tommaso. This clown has robbed us of what is ours by right ; and all we get from him is booty taken from the thief, and restored to its proper owners.

Riccardo. Pish ! I do not need a mother's coaxing to induce me to swallow the medicine. But deal fairly

The Doctor of Florence.

with me ; for, with that plainness which gave our uncle offence and nearly gave you my share of his effects, I tell you now that I shall watch you closely.

Tommaso. You shall see nothing suspicious, unless your doubt creates such visions for your eye.

Enter FILIPPO.

Filippo. There is an old man without, who says his son is hurt, and that he must see the doctor.

Tommaso. Send him away. *[Exit Filippo.]*

Riccardo. You will not murder him? the life of a popolano has triple walls: the secret accusation, the furnishing of public funds, the rabble's vengeance. It will soon be as it was in Pistoia: ennobling will become a commoner's punishment. If you tread on a vulgar corn, look to have your house pulled about your ears. Best be wary.

Tommaso. You are like a woman, Riccardo; in one breath you protest against being informed, and in the next you fall to questioning. However, he has no next of kin to make the charge, to receive the money, or to demand the destruction of the Adimari property.

Riccardo. Corso would revenge the killing of his pet physician.

Tommaso. The Baron's power is in decline; but why

Rinaldo,

should Mallefammi do me harm? The gout is still the tyrant of his limbs despite this quack; and, should Rinaldo die—I mean from natural cause—it is the decree of Providence.

Tedaldo. [*From without.*] I must see him!

Filippo. [*From without.*] You cannot, sir!

Tedaldo. I must! I will!

Enter FILIPPO and TEDALDO.

Filippo. He said that he would come in whether the bakers vote ay or no; and here he is.

Tedaldo. Good sirs, I must speak with the doctor: my son is hurt, and near to death.

Riccardo. In some drunken broil, I'll wager. If I remember, he was one of those that followed Vieri, the Ass of the Gate. I know your son: the streets of the city are too narrow by half for such a swaggerer. His wound must have been given him in return for his insolence.

Tedaldo. He did but defend himself.

Riccardo. No doubt, no doubt.

Enter RINALDO.

Rinaldo. Well, friends.

Tedaldo. O, sir, have pity!

The Doctor of Florence.

Rinaldo. What is your pleasure?

Tedaldo. My son is dying.

Riccardo. You should, then, to a priest.

Rinaldo. Your name is—

Tedaldo. Tedaldo.

Rinaldo. Your wife stopped me on the street. All that I can do at present for your son is done. Let it console you that he will not die.

Tedaldo. God be praised! All that I have, sir, is at your command.

Rinaldo. Then I command you keep it: there is no higher duty than the one you owe your family. Give me no thanks: it is my trade.

Tedaldo. You shall be ever in my prayers!

[*Exit Tedaldo.*]

Riccardo. Humanity! He leaves it to heaven to pay his debts of gratitude.

Rinaldo. How is your father, Riccardo?

Riccardo. Grumbling, grunting, growling. I believe that all his ills are fanciful.

Rinaldo. How seldom reason guides our sympathy!

Tommaso. I have just been telling Riccardo that, if he kept fellowship with you, he would have no need of listening to a priest.

Rinaldo. If the stories of the profligacy of the clergy

Rinaldo,

be not suspicion hatched by self-distrust ; and if the rumors of our midnight conjurations and practice of the black-art be not the puffing of fat Ignorance, you must, to mend your ways or health, Riccardo, be a follower of precept, and not of example.

Riccardo. The devil take the shavelings and the doctors.

Rinaldo. The devil is too good a husbandman to eat his seed-corn.

Tommaso. Riccardo is averse to mending his evil ways so long as he has health to warrant their delights. When he becomes decrepit, he will reform so thoroughly that his funeral clothes will be rent to pieces for holy relics, and his body will cure affliction, and make decayed elms leaf.

Enter FILIPPO, who calls Tommaso apart.

Riccardo. Since I am exposed, I 'll go.

Rinaldo. Wisdom and kindness.

Riccardo. If so valued, my departure should be scored.

Rinaldo. Deliver the goods, and I shall not dispute the rating.

Riccardo. Adieu.

[*Exit Riccardo.*

Rinaldo. [*To himself.*] A blunt, but upright man.

[*Reads.*

The Doctor of Florence.

Tommaso. [*Apart to Filippo.*] What has happened?

Filippo. The Hermit and Elena are below.

Tommaso. The devil 's out of hell. What do they here?

Filippo. To cage the truant lover.

Tommaso. Tell them to go; that he refuses to see them.

Filippo. The old man will not be answered so.

Tommaso. Well, send up the old fool, first and alone. He may arouse Rinaldo's anger, and make him stubborn in his course.

[*Exit Filippo.*]

Rinaldo. What is it, Tommaso?

Tommaso. The rustic Nestor, whom some call the Hermit, desires an audience.

Rinaldo. The Hermit?

Tommaso. Yes; deny him an interview.

Rinaldo. No: I will see him now.

Tommaso. You must, or shut your eyes, for here he comes.

Enter HERMIT.

Rinaldo. Well, sir?

Hermit. "Well, sir;" is that a seemly greeting?

Rinaldo. I am at loss how you would have me greet.

Hermit. An open heart needs no instruction, son:

Its action is spontaneous; 't is when

Rinaldo,

Constrained to feign emotion, that it waits
The operation of the mind, and shows
The awkwardness of insincerity.

Rinaldo. True, but irrelevant.

Hermit. Not so.

Rinaldo. Not so?

Hermit. Peace, son: thou canst not hide thy conscious guilt

Behind an echo tempered with amaze,
And rounded by interrogation. Well—
Far better than could words of nicest choice
Reveal—thou know'st the wrong that thou hast done.

Rinaldo. To whom?

Hermit. To her, Elena, thy betrothed.

Rinaldo. You wrong her by insinuation, sir:
I swear she is as pure as when we met.

Hermit. Were it not so, indeed, thou shouldst not live.

But is there, then, no other injury
To womanhood than that which sullies it?
Is it no crime to lead a trusting girl
To found all earthly happiness on thee;
To lay her plans domestic, and to pray
For little but the blessing of thy love;
To make thy presence change her night to day,

The Doctor of Florence.

Thine absence, day to night—then fling her off?
Who does, deserves Buondelmonte's fate.

Tommaso. A Ghibelline!

Rinaldo. As you well know, I am not one to play
The cool head in a quarrel; yet, in heed
Of friendship and in reverence for your age,
I'll curb my nature's impulse, and will prize
Truths opposite. If one should sound amiss
The feeling of his heart, and haply win
A lady's love, and afterward should find
His passion far too shoaly to upbear
The weighted ship of matrimony, should he wed?—
To live a long and miserable life
(For misery prolongs the days to years),
And though he keep the rending torment hid,
To sigh; to cast on her regretful looks;
To be abstracted, melancholy, cross;
To have an oppressive longing to be free,
Like one entombed alive. If honor claim,
For such a blameless fault, the sacrifice
Of all his days, should he make hers an offering?—
What greater wrong than to take her to wife?

Hermit. Thou hast not well considered what thou dost,

Rinaldo. Yes; long and well.

Hermit.

It is that devil there.

Rinaldo,

Tommaso. A friendly devil, sir.

Rinaldo. Enough of this.

That I do owe you much, I do allow ;
And shall a full appreciation show
By granting all in reason. But to ask
The martyrdom of hope, and to berate
Incessantly, presuming on past service,
Is to imbitter and destroy the fruit
Of favors voluntary—loosing thanks.

Hermit. He makes benevolence a culprit stand !
'T is folly to refute the specious pleas
That one persistent in a wrong doth make.
Say that thou wilt because it is thy will :
I have some patience with frank villainy.—
But I must not imperil her dear cause
By venting selfish choler. Hear me, son.

Rinaldo. Upon another theme : to canvass this
Were vain, and hazardous to comity.
I see that you are travel-stained and worn ;
A servant will conduct you to a room.

Hermit. Not in this doomèd house.

Rinaldo. My guests are free.

Hermit. Think, think, my son.

Rinaldo. I 'll hear no more.

Hermit. Unfeeling man and ingrate ! May this deed

The Doctor of Florence.

Fill every nook and corner of thy brain :
Attainting all thy thoughts—the end of all,
Disjoining words and mind, destroying taste.
And, when thou seek'st to fly thy conscience, mayst
Thou be as one confinèd on a ship
Of pestilence : no boat ; astern, the fin
Of that fell fish which follows in the wake
Of stricken worth—the ravenous shark, Remorse.
May memory and hope and feeling turn
To those dread Furies three, and hold a glass,
Before thy starting eyes, in which is seen
The piteous reflection of thy crime.
Pursued, despairing, mayst thou ne'er find rest
Till, like Athene, death give thee release.

[*Exit Hermit.*

Tommaso. I breathe again. I thought he had forgot
To bring a curse along. I should have known
That curses as inseparable are
From dotage as a staff.

Rinaldo. One agony is over.

Tommaso. Say a laugh.

Rinaldo. I know not how I voiced those sentiments
So foreign to my faith : it seemed to me
That some one else was speaking—'t was not I.

Tommaso. Nor I : I vow it was Demosthenes,

Rinaldo,

Whose spirit borrowed for the nonce your tongue ;
For such expression only he possessed.

Rinaldo. Then come his shade again : I 'll through
it now.

Enter ELENA.

Elena. Rinaldo ! my Rinaldo ! my true love !

[*Throws herself into Rinaldo's arms.*]

They you misconstrue and misrepresent.
They read you as they would a flippant book
Where all is on the page. 'T is only I—

Rinaldo. [*Disengaging himself.*]

Elena, as I wrote you—

Elena. Did you write—

Oh, did you write that cruel, cruel letter ?

I know that it was forgèd : tell me so.

You would not break my heart. What have I done ?

If aught amiss, 't was done unwittingly :

I would not consciously transgress your will

For all this world. You ever use

Too harsh a means to show me your displeasure ;

Reprove me gently when I you offend :

My love doth unset penance, if it err.

Rinaldo. I have no ground for censure—none at all ;
But, as I wrote you, more at length than I
At present shall recount, there are affairs

The Doctor of Florence.

That for our mutual weal do interdict
Our marriage. Still fast friends we shall remain.

Elena. You can not mean it : 't is your anger speaks.

Rinaldo. I am in sober earnest.

Elena. Woe ! woe ! woe !

Rinaldo. Compose yourself.

Elena. Woe ! woe ! I can not think :

My brain is dazed by the flash and roar

Of sorrows terrible. [Weeps.

Tommaso. [Aside.] Now big drops fall.

Elena. When I to-morrow wake from feverish sleep,
And, for a sigh, deem I have dreamt it all,
How can I bide the dawning of this woe
Upon my palling heart !

Rinaldo. Be calm ; be calm.

Elena. I have seen maidens swaying to and fro,
And moaning sad and low for lovers gone,
Yet ever felt as though their state was strange,
And always must be : now it is my own !

Rinaldo. Be reasonable : it is best for me ;
And, being best, if you do love me so,
For my sake you should willingly consent.

Elena. For your sake, yes ; nor leave a wailing grief
To haunt you afterward. But promise me
That no one else shall fill my vacant place ;

Rinaldo,

But promise that, and I shall go away,
And watch your upward journey from afar
With overflowing, but with joyous eyes.
You will not promise? then one only boon:
Let me this locket keep, a token sweet,
A fond remembrance of the dear, dear past,
Where I must look for comfort. Do not think
I mention it but to distress or move;
For once you bade me to return it when
Your love did wane.

Rinaldo.

Elena!

*[Elena faints; Tommaso catches her, lays her
upon a sofa, and rings a bell.]*

Tommaso.

Come, away!

You have filled me with admiration full.

Enter ANDREA.

Attend this lady; if she come not to
Within a minute, let us know at once.

*[Exit Rinaldo, followed by Tommaso, who
meets Filippo.]*

Keep track of her.

[Exit Tommaso; Filippo stands apart.]

Andrea. O mistress, they have killed you! Ope
your eyes.

The Doctor of Florence.

Elena. [*Recovering.*] Where am I?

Andrea. Here, in Florence.

Elena. It comes back :

I would my sleep had been the sleep of death.

Andrea. No, mistress, no : all will in time be right :

I'll be your slave ; my master will repent ;

'T is but a passing fit.—You know his humors.

Elena. Have you some wine?

Andrea. I shall be but a moment. [*Exit Andrea.*

Elena. [*Rising.*] All things are changed, and wear
an aspect strange,

As if I peered through stained glass. Home ! home !

I have no home ; yet can not here remain.

Away ! away ! away ! to any place.

Rinaldo loves me not—most dismal fate !

What have I now to fear? Away ! away !

[*Exit Elena, followed by Filippo.*

Enter HERMIT and ANDREA.

Hermit. Where has she gone?

Andrea. I left her here alone.

Hermit. Elena ! Elena ! Elena !

Andrea. I'll in the garden search. [*Exit Andrea.*

Hermit. I see it all :

She lingered on the Ponte Vecchio

Rinaldo,

As we did cross ; the crazèd girl hath fled
Unto the Arno ; where, unless I haste,
I shall discover her a dripping corpse. [Exit.

Enter RINALDO and TOMMASO.

Rinaldo. Has she gone ?

Tommaso. Yes.

Rinaldo. Oh, that she did not suffer.

Tommaso. Then do you wish that she were dead.

Rinaldo. How so ?

Tommaso. To cease to suffer is to cease to live ;
'T is a law of all existence : kings suffer.

Rinaldo. Kings suffer ? To strut and pose in bilious
strain

Before a breathless world ; their sighs re-echoed,
Their manners aped, their very peevishness
Translated by the crowd as noble passion ;—
This is not suffering.

Tommaso. A case extreme !
Examples often, like ill-trained hounds,
Direct us from the issue. I could paint
The throes of one in duress or in exile.

Rinaldo. Our grief, my lord, as fever, has its change.
First, violent indignation : you will right
The world's injustice by your single arm,

The Doctor of Florence.

Choke from her lying throat the truth withheld,
And pay the past in the exulting triumph.
Your eyes flash fiery, and your arteries throb,
Fierce with an eagerness for instant strife.
And then, when failure has made dull your hope,
You stalk in solitude with brow contract,
Brood on your cares, and mutter to yourself.
This is the time when melancholy fruits,
And gives to poetry her sable charms ;
And he that has not passed this stage exists
Sustained by the romance of his despond.
But what this suffering to that you feel,
To sit alone, and know you are alone ;
To have your hopes, which form by force of habit,
Blasted by the withering thought, how oft the same
Have come before, and been unrealized ;
To start to rail ! and have the sickness of
The repetition recoil upon your soul ;
To have no tears, no voice to vent your woe,
Till the moaning of the wind seems your own wail !
This is a stage of naked grief, my lord,
That princes scarce can reach.

Tommaso.

There still is hope.

Rinaldo. Why do you say "there still is hope," my
lord ?

Rinaldo,

Tommaso. To learn you are not past the second stage.

Rinaldo. I spoke not of myself.

Tommaso.

Then let us trust

She's not beyond the first.

Rinaldo.

You know her not,

Tommaso : she has an artless, loving nature,

Which, being harmed, lays not the blame so much

To others' cruelty as to its weakness—

Which grieves and grieves and chides itself for grieving.

Tommaso. You are a hypochondriac in fears !—

You must have eaten some plague-stricken fowl

That nature will not brook, and now mistake

An outraged stomach for a troubled heart.

Rinaldo. I've studied physic, then, to little purpose.

Tommaso. A smile ! a smile ! by heaven, I'll give it
cheer,

That, meeting welcome, it may come again.

Our stomachs are our authors : mark that splenetic,

Who sneers at all pretensions ; writes of ills,

Our love for faction, and our vicious taste ;

And points the present to those virtuous days

Before the teeming city loosed her zone.

Then men rough cloth and skins uncovered wore,

And caps and leathern sandals most uncouth ;

The ladies of the highest rank enclosed

The Doctor of Florence.

Their dainty feet and limbs in plainest hose,
Donned petticoats of Ypres scarlet, or
Of Camlet, with beseeeming girdles bound,
And hooded mantles lined with minever ;
While women of the lower classes were
With a green fabric of Cambrai content.
With viands coarse their frugal boards were spread ;
A man and wife from the same platter ate ;
One hundred lire was an ample dower.
In short, they all were thrifty, modest, sage ;
And we are spendthrifts, libertines, and fools.—
His food hath not digested for a week.
Behold that jovial minstrel, whistling off
Those epicurean sonnets—

Rinaldo. Pray, no more ;

I am not in the vein for pleasantry :
To smile seems guiltiness.

Tommaso. The secret 's out :

You are a piece of clay.

Rinaldo. A piece of clay ?

What do you mean by that ?

Tommaso. Why, every one,

Like great Achilles, has a vital spot :
I 've brought the fool to light. Conceited man :
To think a girl will mourn his loss for aye !

Rinaldo,

You do not fathom women. They will weep ;
But tears are water ; water is unstable :
A wet grief is not lasting. I 'll engage
That in a month she 'll have another lover.

Rinaldo. Impossible !

Tommaso. 'T is not impossible ; and let me add
(To give a passport to your current course
Through the molested region of your doubts),
I 've heard—with circumstances, some of which,
Notorious, give credence to the rest ;
And with details, convincing, since many are
Irrelevant and show no story framed—
That she with young gallants has been too free,
And that her guardian used her as a wife.

Rinaldo. Why, damn their souls, they lie ! Foul-
mouthèd bawds !

Malicious devils ! fiends !—there is no name
Within hell's sulphurous vocabulary
That can portray them rightly. Curst be the arm
That strikes down sin repentant ; thrice accurst
Be that invidious—that malignant hand
Which spills the spiced chalice of fair fame,
And holds to Virtue's lips the bitter cup
Of evil reputation. Cunning knaves,
To mingle what is true and what is false,

The Doctor of Florence.

Concocting the most dangerous of lies ;
To tell with unimportant incidents,
The sure attendants on a trusty tale :
Thus making virgin Truth black Falsehood's trull.
I know her better than I know myself :
I could foretell how, tempted, she would act,
But not what I should do. Most damnèd lie !
Had I the man that gave that slander life,
I'd tear the tongue from out the villain's mouth,
And crush his skull as I would crush the head
Of an envenomed reptile !

Tommaso.

So would I ;

For who has suffered more than I from calumny ?
But, luckily for him, he is not here ;—
Or, better say, but luckily for her ;
For woman is woman's natural enemy.
But come : we've talked this over countless times,
And many cogent reasons have we found
Why you should take this step. These are increased
By your betrothal : should you cast her off,
The high-bred maiden would expire of shame
(For action similar, Florence bleeds to-day),
Her relatives would arm—

Rinaldo. Well, let them arm ; I fear them not.

Tommaso.

Unless their cause be just ;

Rinaldo,

And just it would be. But, above all else,
The lady loves you—dotes upon you, sir :
You are her earth, round which her thoughts and dreams,
Like heavenly lights of day and night, revolve.

Rinaldo. Well, I will on, but not upon false grounds.

Tommaso. A sensible conclusion : false needs false
To prop it up, while truth will stand alone.
As for arrangements, leave them all to me.
I know how trifles, like a swarm of gnats,
Do ruffle minds that would unmoved be
By things of greater moment : this it is
That has brought many a huge Philistine down,
And wrought a pigmy's triumph.
What day shall be selected for your nuptial ?

Rinaldo. The sooner 't is, the better.

Tommaso. Love's reply !

This jackdaw to a cooing dove will moult.
Now, to be plain and pointed in my speech,
You ponder too much o'er a project formed.
The contemplation of an icy flood
Is colder than the plunge ; and there is naught
But has its drawbacks, which, too steady scanned,
Enlarge as eyes of monsters in a dream ;
Crowd out the merits, and fill up the brain :
Like to a flaw so slight it passes long

The Doctor of Florence.

Unseen ; once seen, the eye sees nothing else.
The man of execution is the one
That, seizing on the features prominent,
Acts on the motion. What more could you ask ?
Rich, fair, and noble ;—would your fortune mine.

Enter FILIPPO.

Filippo. Signior Riccardo is without, my lord,
And says he is in haste.

Tommaso. Well, I must go.
Keep your internal choir to lively beat,
Or it will dirges sing to you instead
Of epithalamies. Adieu, adieu.

[Exeunt Tommaso and Filippo.]

Rinaldo. How little can the ordinary heart,
Which performs its functions as the clock tells time—
How little can it know
Of agony of soul ! Pierce its thick skin,
The wound heals up, and all is as before ;
Yet do but score such organs as a few
Are curst with, and the scratch doth fester there,
Discharging virus that inflames the whole.

Enter ANDREA.

[Gruffly.] How now, Andrea ?

Andrea. Master, I have come
To get permission to depart.

Rinaldo,

- Rinaldo.* Well, go ;
But be not long.
- Andrea.* I mean, to quit your service.
- Rinaldo.* Thou wouldst desert me?—ungrateful boy !
Though rude I have been in my speech of late,
I have been sorely tried ; and 't is my vice
To find relief in paining those I love.
I cannot promise how I shall conduct :
The past shows me each resolution broke ;
But know, through all my moods, I hold thee dear :
I would not lose thee for one-half my wealth.
- Andrea.* Nor would I leave you, if I could remain.
- Rinaldo.* Thou 'rt angry ?
- Andrea.* No.
- Rinaldo.* Is it a money matter ?
I 'll give thee any sum.
- Andrea.* Oh, no ; indeed !
- Rinaldo.* Then art thou angry ; and thy cold disclaim,
Which cuts the pride for free forgiveness set
And shames the conscience more than would reproach,
Is part of thy revenge. Should impulse rule,
Though I have wronged thee, I should bid thee go ;
But no, Andrea : we were boys together ;
And no face is so sweet to us as one
Familiar to our youth. The memory
Of childish dreams and plans, of petty troubles

The Doctor of Florence.

On which age yearning looks, endears thee so,
No heavenly spirit could usurp thy place.—
Thou shalt not go.

Andrea. [*Aside.*] If I could tell him that I follow her!
[*To him.*] Believe me, master, 't is not my desire,
And yet I can not stay.

Rinaldo. Perhaps 't is best
For thy true happiness. Here is a purse.
When that is empty, let me hear thy wants,
And they shall cease to be. Nay; take the gold:
Pure friendship, like itself, is much too soft;
Alloyed with this, it wears.

Andrea. [*Aside.*] For her I 'll take it.

Rinaldo. Speak not, Andrea—go! [*Exit Andrea.*

They leave me, all.—

Oh, cursèd disposition, which heartless acts,
Yet in each deed finds pity for itself!
Would I were wholly good, or wholly bad!
To have the devilishness to do a crime,
And still, the conscience to repent. O fiends!
To every damnèd quality chain fast
A vigorous virtue, yet too weak to quell
Its loathsome fellow, and you rend the heart
With such despairing struggles and remorse,
Hell seems a restful haven to the soul! [*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—*A Room in an Inn.*

Enter PERONELLA, FILIPPO, and TOMMASO.

Peronella. These are her lodgings, sir.

Filippo. Saint Julian

Provide me better quarters ; else my prayers
For the progenitors of other saints.

Tommaso. We'll wait her coming ; but no inkling
give

That we are here.

Filippo. We would not have you strip
A wingèd pleasure of its golden fleece—
Its startle : flayed, it is a common ram,
And is by the old housewife, Reason, scaled.
I see the figure has too deep a keel,
And roils the waters of her shallow mind.

Peronella. Signior Tommaso, what do you intend ?
The lady is so gentle, so unhappy.
She nothing does but sigh and weep ; essays
At times to sing, but trembles, chokes, and sobs.

Tommaso. Hast been a Florentine, and not observed
That meddling is unsafe and profitless ?

The Doctor of Florence.

Filippo. Hast been so long a libel on thy sire,
And need a gloss to show what "meddler" means?
'T is one that carts the refuse of the streets,
And gets for wage the refuse that he carts.
His balky ass is wiser than himself:
'T is Folly goading Wisdom. Dost thou see?
The fool oft strives to reconcile two foes.
The reconciliation thus evolves:
"The knave deceived me." "So did he me."
Then both: "Embrace!"—God help the make-peace
then!

Tommaso. While my companion's sapience waits a
breeze,
I'll let you in our secret.

Filippo. What is that
Your sex most prizes, but most freely gives?

Tommaso. He is her brother, whom she mourns as
drowned.

In voyage home from the Levant, his ship
Off Sicily was driven by northern winds
Upon the Barbary sands. The rest were lost.
He, clinging to the stranded wreck for days,
Was rescued by a pirate's galiot,
And held for ransom; which was tardy got.

Filippo. My sister! my dear sister!

Rinaldo,

Tommaso. [*Apart to Filippo.*] Cursèd fool !

Peronella. May heaven pardon, if you wrong her,
sirs.

Tommaso. Have you a license? Is your house a
stew?

No jewels worn? nor chaplets? I have heard

The Esecutore of the district hath

Inquiry made. He is my sponsor-friend.

Peronella. Alas, kind gentlemen, I am too poor.

Tommaso. Make poverty a seer. Close tight your
teeth;

Draw over them your lips: and keep your tongue,

By double fastening, indoor. Go spend this money.

[*Gives her a purse.*]

Peronella. I thank you, sir; I'll do as you com-
mand.

Filippo. [*Sings.*]

*Fair woman's mouth, the ancient jar,
From which our pain and troubles are.*

Peronella. [*Aside.*] 'T is not for this I do it, but
for fear.

That countenance is neither kith nor kin

Of her sweet face—that patient, tear-chapped face,

With its soft lights engirt by sorrow's weeds.

The Doctor of Florence.

And then Tommaso glanced on him so fierce.
If they do violence to her, I will have
Matteo, the Executor, informed.
He 'll quickly teach these lustful noblemen
That rape is not among the listed arts.

Tommaso. [*To Peronella.*] Well? well?

[*Exit Peronella.*]

Filippo. She did not credit you, my lord ;
I judge she takes you for a Peeping Tom.

Tommaso. You dolt ! when will you learn to hold
your peace ?

Filippo. Peace does not wear the Adimari dress :
I have not met him in your service, sir.

Tommaso. Nor have I seen him since I you engaged.

Filippo. Would that off Sicily I had been drowned ;
My brain extracted, and my noddle filled
With the red coral : 't is more prized than wit.

Tommaso. Listen : if she refuse my proffered love,
Steal you behind her ; when I gesture so,
Clap hand upon her mouth ; then with your cloak
Stifle her screams.

Filippo. What next ?

Tommaso. As we have planned :
A little of this drug ; then to my villa
On the Bologna road. When she awakes

Rinaldo,

Within my arms, her scruples will have fled.
Once past San Gallo's Gate, the horses urge.

Filippo. But if she scratches, and doth rend my cloak,
You'll make it good? The honest fripperer,
From whom I purchased it, extolled it high.

Tommaso. Have sense! I think I hear her footsteps;
come! [*They conceal themselves.*

Enter ELENA.

Elena. I saw him as he San Giovanni passed.
He seemed a stranger—like an aliened friend,
To whom the old-time feeling rushes out,
But quick recoils. Oh, must I still exist
When living is more dread than sudden death!
The sound of sorrow new would welcome be
To break this awful monotone of woe.
Each dawn looks forward to the eve for change;
Each eve, to dawn. The mind each Saint-day sets
As blessed limit to its lengthy strain,
And, like an anxious watcher in the night,
It breathless waits: the footsteps louder grow,
And expectation swells; they pass it by;
And, with receding echoes, dies the hope.
O'erchargèd with its grief, it swoons away,
And, in the swoon, recovers strength to grieve.

The Doctor of Florence.

I daily hear the blind, deformed, disgraced
Beg thee for life—give them my life, O God !
But this is sinful ; I should have the strength
To seek a convent's gate ; and yet I must,
Like one that bears the brand of hidden guilt,
Behold the thing that most distracts my heart.
O Prayer ! to thee, as ever, I will fly,
Sweet intercessor for the troubled soul.

[*Kneels before a crucifix.*]

Tommaso. [*Apart.*] Perhaps it were as well to seize
her now.

Filippo. Not I for all the wealth consumed by fire,
For which the Cavalcanti sweated blood.

Tommaso. You superstitious fool !

Filippo. Were you as free
With your salvation as with mine, my lord,
The devil would be scared, lest you should 'scape
By virtue of your generosity.

Elena. [*Rising.*] Love is not love that must its love
possess ;

Love is not love that fickleness can dim ;
Love is not love that wanes when it doth find
Its object dark and needful of its light :
True love, like full moon on a stormy night,
Though unrequited and by clouds obscured,

Rinaldo,

Still round its heavenly orbit struggles on,
And strives to shine on its beloved world.

Tommaso. [*Coming from concealment.*]

My heart hath found a minstrel in your tongue ;
His royal ear my songs have e'er displeased.

Elena. Who 's there ?

Tommaso. A slave, a lover, and a friend.

Elena. My lord, what do you wish ?

Tommaso. Not very much,

Should you be valued by Rinaldo's eyes ;
But all the world, if my own sight apprise.

Filippo. [*Aside.*]

Why, that 's a rhyme ! well, let it go : forsooth,
Rhyme, rhythm, metre crystallize a truth.

Elena. I do not understand you. Your intent
Is surely knightly, and I need not fear.

Tommaso. Our conduct can no better guide employ
Than honorable purpose. Therefore, lady,
Be re-assured, and cease to tremble so.
And if "I love you" need a notary's seal
To give it greater credence, find it here :
In your misfortune, I do love you best.
That I can bear the obloquy and hate
Of this most spiteful world, for your dear sake ;
Can share your sorrows—nay, bear all the weight—

The Doctor of Florence.

And from a lowly station raise you up,
Gives me more pleasure than could you bestow
A joint-seating on an empress' throne.
True love, as you have beautifully said,
Doth greater wax, the greater it is tried ;
And courage ne'er is so invincible
As when with lance in rest for innocence.

Elena. O sir, I thank you for your deep regard ;
Without affection I could never wed.

Filippo. [*Aside.*] His wife, indeed ! well that 's a
roaring joke.

Elena. You know I love another.

Tommaso. Bah ! and he—

What small discernment did the ancients show
In their belief that, in the company
Of Anteros, the little Eros grew !
Like Hebrews they perused the prophets backward.
But I 'll be cool ; for through your reason I
Would win your love, and then 't will longer bide.
Though it is hard, when thinking of his deeds,
To ballast every utterance with its cause,
And steer it to the harbor of your sense.

Elena. I am too weak the weakest to condemn.
The veering of the wind may wholly change
Our destiny ; and trifles often shroud,

Rinaldo,

In a misleading haze, a world of good.
Those are, I know, who long have borne the ban
Of honest men, till some slight circumstance,
By chance disclosed, proclaimed them doubly saints,
And filled with penitence convicting minds.
Such potent factors small things are in life,
That we, in adverse judgment, well should pause.—
He may have reason, or he may relent.

Tommaso. A reason has he—you are of low birth ;
But reparation is beyond his beck :
He marries Thursday next a wealthy dame.

Elena. Oh no ! it cannot be ! it cannot be !

Tommaso. So said Canute, but still the tide came in.

Elena. To tell me this is a most cruel jest.

Tommaso. As it is true or false, let my suit fare.
Send for your hostess ; 't is the city's talk.

Elena. [*To herself.*] And yet, he would not promise when I asked.

Tommaso. For then he was betrothed to her he weds.

Elena. Slow death is come at last !

Tommaso. No : life and love.
You 'll live to bless him for inconstancy.
The day of grief is a poor eminence
From which to view the glory of the morrow ;
But your experience shall vouch it true

The Doctor of Florence.

That fate is often wiser than desire.
You lose Rinaldo, and Tommaso gain—
A rude plebeian for a nobleman ;
A faithless lover for a lover true.

Elena. Think of the wrongs you have already done,
And leave me—pity me, and go at once.

Tommaso. For shame ! if there were kindled in your
heart

One spark of gratitude, 't would dry each sob
Into a hiss. I come to offer you
A home, protection, station, and my love ;
You greet me with reproachful words and tears.
If past unworthiness damn present worth,
To native skies let dear Religion soar,
And true Repentance follow in her flight.
A man should be a study to himself,
And make his failings work to virtuous ends.
What I have been has made me what I am :
The trustier that I know the sweets of sin
To turn to bitterness.

Elena. Forgive me, sir ;
But, by your manhood, I implore you go.

Tommaso. My manhood bids me save you from
yourself :
You must be mine.

Rinaldo,

Elena. I can be only Death's.

Tommaso. I will not yield you to the monster yet.

[Makes a signal, and Filippo, who has stolen behind Elena, attempts to place his hand over her mouth.

Elena. Help! help!

Tommaso. You clumsy clown!

Elena. Help! help!

[They muffle her head with Filippo's cloak.

Tommaso. We shall not need the drug. Come; I will lead.

Enter the HERMIT and ANDREA.

Andrea. Unhand the lady!

Tommaso. *[Drawing.]* Meddling fools, away!

Andrea. *[Drawing.]*

Not for a million lives! 'T is she! 't is she!

[Tommaso and Andrea fight; Filippo lays Elena down, and draws his sword.

Hermit. Oh for a weapon!

Tommaso. Take that for your pains!

[Stabs the Hermit, and then flies; Andrea wounds Filippo; Filippo falls.

Filippo. The cowardly dog!

[Andrea uncovers Elena's face.

The Doctor of Florence.

Andrea. See ! see ! 't is she ! we 've found her, sir,
at last !

Hermit. She 's in a faint. Place her upon the bed.
[*Andrea does so.*]

Andrea. O sir, you 're badly hurt ! Look at the
blood !

Hermit. A scratch, a scratch—a flesh-wound at the
most.

Elena. [*Opening her eyes.*] Have mercy, sir !

Hermit. You are with friends, my child.

Andrea made both villains use their legs.

Elena. *Andrea* !

Andrea. Mistress, did I die this hour,
I know that my creation's turn is served.

Elena. How came you here ?

Hermit. We heard your cries for help ;
And when we entered your assailants fled.

Andrea. No : one of them lies here.

Filippo. Would that you lied.

Elena. Poor man ! he 's wounded ; tend him,
father, quick !

Filippo. The priest ! I 'm dying ! I 'll confession
make !

O damned poltroon to fly at sight of steel !

Had you not run, we could have stuck them both.

Rinaldo,

Hermit. Rest, daughter, where you are. Andrea, come ;

In the adjoining room I 'll dress his wound.

[*The Hermit and Andrea bear Filippo off.*]

Elena. This may a judgment be for selfish grief—

An answer to my heedless cry for change.

O God ! receive his unprepared soul.

Enter ANDREA.

How is he ?

Andrea. The death-damp 's on his brow.

I came, dear mistress, to attend to you.

Elena. Then hasten back ; you may be of some aid.

A moment stop. Andrea, have you heard—

Does—does Rinaldo wed ? Alas ! I see

An affirmation in your looks. Go now.

[*Exit Andrea.*]

I will my father ask ;—yet all may be

By a report deceived. My eyes shall see :

I'll go disguisèd to Rinaldo's house

Upon his wedding-night—his wedding-night ?

If such, may morning's vapor be my shroud.

SCENE II.—*A Court before Rinaldo's Loggia.*

Enter RINALDO, BELCOLORE, and Wedding-train.

The Doctor of Florence.

Rinaldo. [*Stumbling.*] An omen ill !

[*Exeunt. Players, Jugglers, and others enter, and pass into the house.*]

Enter Three Gentlemen.

First Gentleman. A brighter day ne'er shoved old
Time along.

Second Gentleman. But Night, the dark-robed, vener-
able priest,

Comes to reprove the too exultant maid,
And teach her humbleness.

First Gentleman. Unfrock the priest !

Did he not blind the champion of truth,
The friend of virtue—the beholding Eye,
Whose lightning is more dreaded than the bolts
Of mighty Zeus—old Lucifer would hence,
And turn his powers to deviling those he has.

Second Gentleman. You quarrel with my priest ! have
at your Eye !

'T was he that wrought fruit-loving Adam's fall :
Robbed Samson of his flowing locks and strength ;
And lost Mark Antony the rule of Rome.
When we are cool and virtuously bent,
'T is he that, spying out a graceful nymph,
Addresses thus the will : " A lovely form !

Rinaldo,

How close her soft, loose-fitting garments cling !
Behold her shapely ankle, slender waist,
And snowy bosom peeping from the lace,
Her moist, half-parted lips, her glistening teeth,
And eyes that dance, like wavelets in the sun,
Yet show a depth beneath ; her curling hair—
(Now Conscience, hold your peace ! Give me a
chance !)

She may be frail,—the beautiful oft are.
You need not go beyond discretion's bounds.”
Oh, were we moles, we surely all were saints !
Then sing no more the praises of this evil—
The carnal Eye ! the tempter of the devil !

Third Gentleman. Hold ! hold, sir ! you are verging
on a rhyme :

And when one rhymes, I know his muse is jaded,
And gives us jingle and a dearth of thought.

First Gentleman. 'T is not the Eye that these com-
plaints indict—

Third Gentleman. Enough ! enough ! the thread of
discourse's frayed :

And each will follow out a different strand,
And argue on till doomsday. Breathe awhile.
Like speech extempore, you bravely popped,
But fizzled at the close. And then the time !

The Doctor of Florence.

Though *dulce est desipere in loco*,
Yet he that at a wedding can disport
Could hold carousal on his father's bier,
And joke the corpse. So kneel, and let us pray.

Enter Torch-bearers.

First Gentleman. The walking stars !

Second Gentleman. The meteors, you bat !
By Hymen sent to light the tardy guests.

Enter Philosopher.

First Gentleman. Here comes a poet or philosopher :
No one could be so ragged and be neither.
Good sir, I would of you some wisdom beg.

Philosopher. I cannot spare the quantity thou need'st.

First Gentleman. A biting jest ! but I will stretch
my mouth,

And say " ha ! ha !" to show I am not bit.
Though small my need, it would impoverish you,
Were wisdom not a Hydra, on whose trunk
Each head destroyed is quick replaced by two—
The old, another of experience born.
Then let me make so bold as to request
The recipe of fortune : how much man,
How much of lion and how much of fox,

Rinaldo,

How much of jackass and how much of hog,
It takes to make the rich ragout, success.

Philosopher. Thou hast but two ingredients in thee.

Second Gentleman. All hog and jackass !

Third Gentleman. He divined the cross :
Stock-breeding, not philosophy 's his forte.

First Gentleman. A savory dish may well be made
of these :

They form the bulk and body of the stew.
Improve the jackass, and make fat the hog.

Philosopher. The sharpest pangs from aspiration
come :

A well-born ass is at its best at birth ;
And fattening hogs is but increasing pork.

First Gentleman. You put too much of pepper in
your hash.

But asses perseverance have, at least ;
And hogs no bashfulness : I still insist.

Philosopher. If thou art unsuccessful, associate
But with successful men. Art thou successful ?—
No ? then I'll none of thy poor company.

[*Exit Philosopher.*

First Gentleman. A bitter philosopher !

Second Gentleman. Philosophy
Has e'er been so since Socrates drank hemlock.

The Doctor of Florence.

Enter TORELLO and CATERINA.

What have we here?

Third Gentleman.

Two clowns!

Caterina.

Good gentlemen,

Does one Rinaldo own this house and ground?

Second Gentleman. No man owns anything: all things
are His.

Caterina. Well, does a doctor called Rinaldo live
here?

Second Gentleman. No man, in his own right, doth
live at all;

His soul it is that lives, and it belongs

To Him or him—the title 's often cloudy.

Caterina. You are too good, sir, to be sensible.

Torello. This is Rinaldo's fool, perhaps, my dear;
The old lord had one.

Caterina.

He that 's not the fool

Reply. Is this Rinaldo's wedding-place?

We should have been here sooner, but our horse

(The Lord put on his back Torello's oaths)

Went lame; and we the journey made afoot.

Second Gentleman. Bucephalus would limp with such
a load.

First Gentleman. I am the keeper of these motley
fools.

Rinaldo,

One's name is Joke ; the other's name is Laugh.
Joke's business is to perpetrate the jest ;
Laugh's business, to applaud it. This is why
Laugh is so silent, hollow-eyed, and morbid ;
Why Joke, so frisky, talkative, and bright,
Like witty landlord at his tenant's board,
Assured his worst will take the house by storm.

Caterina. They all are fools. Torello, let 's go in.

First Gentleman. Alas ! dear madam, you have come too late.

To ease your anger, you can goad the horse ;
As for your hunger, we are stationed here
To feed your imagination with recount
Of luxuries now fairly on their road
To good digestion ; and to bid you go,
For your night's lodging, to the nearest inn.
There tell the host you are the doctor's friends,
And he will charge you friendly rates—three prices.
The feast is o'er ; the tables are removed ;
The bride and groom and everyone abed.
A noble feast it was ! ten courses served !—

Caterina. Stop where you are. Rinaldo is a brute !

First Gentleman. Philosophy, thou Merovingian king !

By thy wee minister, the Sense, deposed !—

The Doctor of Florence.

That canst not us with sackcloth richly clothe,
Nor fill our bellies with the name of bread !

Caterina. Did I not tell you so, Torello ? did I not ?
And let me tell you—you, you jack-a-napes !—

First Gentleman. List to an empty stomach's malediction !

Caterina. Torello, draw your sword. Well I 'll be hanged !

He wears his sword behind him like a tail.

Third Gentleman. He does so *in memoriam* of home.

Caterina. Oh, laugh, you fools ! Your master is a cur !
We will not hear you out ; we 'll leave you now.

First Gentleman. "Then" has curst many ; "now"
has blest a few :

As of that few we shall enroll ourselves.

[*Exeunt Caterina and Torello.*

What peacock would not envy her that strut ?

Enter RINALDO.

Rinaldo. You honor Heaven, my friends, and slight
my house,

By spending so much leisure out-of-doors.

Second Gentleman. Which were it best to honor ?

Rinaldo. For which life ?

Second Gentleman. An hourly question, answering
what it asks !

Rinaldo,

Rinaldo. Or have you prospering rivals in the hall ;
And in the air hold sullen convocation ?

Second Gentleman. Instead, we have been taking
mental toll
Of those that sought admittance to your presence.
We 've made philosophy and poesy
A legal tender.

Rinaldo. Noble work, indeed ;
But you, I know, are wanted for the dance.
I 'll keep the gate ; my heels lack education.

First Gentleman. Debar those, sir, who cannot sing,
write verse,

Or wisely, on man's future state, discourse.

[*Exeunt Gentlemen, followed by Torch-bearers.*]

Rinaldo. [*Sits down, and then rises.*]
What posture 's easy to a restless soul !
O Conscience ! why art thou so stern a judge ?
I have not taken life,—not even done
That deed of shame, which, from the fact of its
Accomplishment, extenuation draws,
And, from the degradation it has wrought,
Releasement from the palpable redress.
Alas ! these words are water to a burn :
Guilt is determined by the guilty mind.
The inner voice that censures most severe

The Doctor of Florence.

Cries loudest 'gainst commission of the crime :
Thus, in each breast, are heaven-adjusted scales,
On which the sin and punishment are weighed
Throughout this life and for eternity.

Enter BELCOLORE.

Belcolore. I've sought you everywhere.

Rinaldo. Why did you not
A servant send? Where can Filippo be?
He has not been about for several days.

Belcolore. [*Agitated.*] Tommaso did reluctantly dismiss him.

Filippo had more wit and learning than
Is common to his class ; these made him pert,
Then impudent, then unendurable.
'T is a wise rule not to engage a man
Above the station you would have him fill ;
Nor even a faithful servant to employ
The second time : he never does so well.

Rinaldo. 'T was on this principle you chose your husband.

Belcolore. What principle, my lord?

Rinaldo. To feel assured
Of his submission, you selection made
Beneath the place.

Rinaldo,

Belcolore. You are so gay to-night !
I think Tommaso and your knitted brow,
Your stooping posture and your measured words
Have all been great deceivers.

Rinaldo. Pray, in what ?

Belcolore. I find you merry.

Rinaldo. Is that strange ?

Belcolore. No, no ;
And yet, you have so much to do with death.

Rinaldo. That is a doubtful compliment indeed.

Belcolore. I do not mean it so. Oh, can I hope
That it is I who have your gloom dispelled ?

Rinaldo. Truly, I am not, lady, what I seem.
Beneath this melody of cheerfulness
Are deep and solemn chords vibrating low,
Like the distant tolling of a muffled bell.
They play a funeral march ; and my sad soul,
Clad in the dark habiliments of gloom,
Follows the bier of time, on which my life
Is slowly borne to a preparèd grave.
E'en when I realize it not, those strains
Of mournful music steal upon my heart,
And fill it with a melancholy dread
That tinctures all my joy. I feel like one
Oppressed, who has the cause a spell forgot,

The Doctor of Florence.

And knows not why he suffers, till he stops,
And questions of himself.

Belcolore. 'T is pity, sir,
You spent so many years in rustic life.
Yours is a nature that nutrition draws
From mingling with, and studying mankind ;
The country starves it. You need society,
Not boisterous, yet gay ; nor wise, nor silly.
The lighter and convivial faculties
Are, otherwise, by serious ones suppressed,
And fall before Death's fatal dart, disuse.
Nor should we slight them, harmony being life.
Kings can with cooks less readily dispense,
Than cooks with kings. The moralists must found
Their bridge that touches the celestial shore
Upon the body's wants, or floods, like that
Which swept the Ponte Vecchio away,
Will bear their airy span down passion's stream.
You see I've learnt from your devoted friend
To what you do incline. Shall we go in ?
The cold and dampness would my spirit chill.

Rinaldo. Well, as you wish. [*Aside.*] I feel a
strange desire
That urges me here to remain alone. [*Exeunt.*]

Rinaldo,

[Elena, in her night-robe and with hair disheveled, passes through the court into the house.]

SCENE III.—*Hall in Rinaldo's House. Guests dancing.
After the dance they converse in groups.*

Enter RINALDO and BELCOLORE.

Belcolore. We are a little late : the dance is over.

Rinaldo. Why has the music ceased ?

[To a Servant.] Go bid them play.

[Exit Servant. Music.]

I make good resolutions, when I hear
The strains of music. In my bosom swells
A thankfulness akin to that we feel
When we are wakened from a frightful dream
By sunlight and the twittering of birds.
The silent, deep recesses of the heart
Responsive echo the melodious waves
That gently break upon the raptured sense ;
And courage, love, and charity arise,
As snowy sea-gulls from their rocky home
At dawn of morning. It is wonderful
How sweet sounds spirit the divine within,
And show our natures better than ourselves.

The Doctor of Florence.

Belcolore. We shall have sprightly music ever by,
That will imaginary dirges drown—
As luring as the songs the Sirens sing,
And yet, withal, as loyal as the airs
That moved Mount Helicon to ecstasy.
And, with the silvery thread of melody,
I will entwine the golden strand of love,
To bind you fast on our enchanted isle.—
Love rules the heart, which still doth rule the mind.

Rinaldo. Would that we could in speculation dwell.
I'm in a charitable mood to-night :
My ghost would pardon my life's murderer.
[*Changing his manner.*] I, even with serenity, can brook
This garrulous old man, who pounces on
Each feathered member of the mental brood,
Like awkward scullion capturing a fowl,
And, with a sputtering and a wild grimace,
Holds by the tail his flapping, squawking prize.

Frederico. Good sir, you have forgotten me, I fear :
You did not call upon me yesterday.

Rinaldo. A fee rejuvenates the memory.

Frederico. You doctors are too merciless on those
Made helpless by disease. You say to them :
“Yield us your purse, or yield your life and it.”
You give them health to live in poverty.

Rinaldo,

A hundred ducats for a single day
Will soon be moderate hire.

Rinaldo. I make the rich,
For my benevolence to others, pay.

Frederico. Then is it their benevolence, not yours.

Rinaldo. It being theirs, it settles not my bill.
I ask a liberal man a liberal sum,
Since I by skill a precious life prolong ;
I mulct the miser that I may discharge
Amercement for the crime I do mankind,
By lengthening his days.—'T is choice, not price :
Which shall it be, sir, mean or generous ?

Frederico. Why, generous ; and am I not in fact
To bring you silver vases as a gift ?
You will not give them to these mountebanks ?
See to it, lady, that he does not do so.
It is not bounty, but a craven's deed
To give for fashion where no friendship is.

Rinaldo. How far back does the observation run ?

Frederico. Not to my giving : though verily it should,
For your last bill undid your physic's work.
But then I see : it is a trick of trade
To keep me on the list.

Belcolore. Physicians should,
Before the convalescent stage, collect.

The Doctor of Florence.

Frederico. I 'm very far from that : I cannot sleep—
It seems I am a roost for every ill ;
Nor can I eat—

Rinaldo. What was your midday fare ?

Frederico. A partridge, pheasant, hare, a loin of
meat,

Bologna sausage, and a little wine,
And relishes to tempt the appetite.

Rinaldo. This is damnation, not temptation, sir.
And yet you have the gout !

Frederico. A vile disease,
That aches so much and draws no sympathy !
But, were that all, I might with it make terms :—
Here come Tommaso and the man I saw
Those vases viewing with a ravished eye—
A fellow of good taste, but no resources.

Tommaso. This is the poet from Arezzo, sir,
Whose verses you so very much admired.

Rinaldo. I thought we were not friendly with Arezzo.

Poet. Our artists freely move 'mong hostile courts ;
True art, they say, is a cosmopolite.

Rinaldo. It is not so with Dante. Yet welcome, sir :
I care not from what city you do hail—
A man 's a man to me ; none honored more
Than tidings-bearer from the land of dreams.

Rinaldo,

Poet. Bards are not angels though they fly, my lord,
And sorry guests they prove. 'T is said of them
They are like babies with the colic plagued
That fret their faithful nurses with their plaints
And know not what they would ; and yet, perchance,
If by some witchcraft they could have their will,
They might select some lone Olympian mount
Where they could reign divine. Still would they war,
For when in the arena poets meet
They fight to death, let thumbs be up or down.
Still would they wail, for wailing is their breath :
Ambrosia would have lost its ancient smack
And nectar its bouquet ; and, like the gods,
They would descend to earth for their amours,
Ruin the lives of trusting maids, and think
To salve a wounded honor with a line.
They have to learn the dignity of Art,
That vies not with the world in worldly things,
That envies not the Campanian dame her gems :
Her children are her jewels, and hot cares
Distill her soul to crystal purity.

Rinaldo. What answer make the minstrels to this
charge ?

Poet. This is their plea, my lord : “ We are distort
In body and in mind, and ask for much

The Doctor of Florence.

Since we are lotted but the air we breathe.
In youth, we are attuned to chivalry :
The thrilling harp, the stirring tournament,
The daring venture for a dungeoned knight—
Or for a ribbon from our lady's hair.
We find the age of heroism past,
And drunken Avarice puking on the throne.
To this besotted king we needs must kneel,
Write ringing sonnets to his bleared eyes,
Appraise as justice each deboshed decree,
Or else we starve, and loved ones perish with us.
Reproach not, then, our most intemperate verse :
Crushed hearts ferment and make the wine of song !
When we are ashes your slow natures move
To whining praise ; you say : ' Alas, poor soul !
How ill-requited for his rich bequest—
His life-long race with sacred torch aflame
That sweet Romance might follow in his steps
Through sensual darkness till the dawn appear.
Would I had been there to relieve his need !'
You crowd the places where we wept alone ;
Hallow the few and trivial things we touched ;
Erect us sepulchres at princely cost,
One tithe of which would have delayed their use
And filled our being with the joy of life ;

Rinaldo,

Buy monuments—yea, fountains for the dead,
And not a drink of water for the living !”
And both speak truth, my lord ; for poets are
The creatures of two worlds, unfit for either.

Rinaldo. His words proclaim him kindred to my
soul.—

Give him the richest present of them all !—
Do not to-night depart ; I know your life
And worth, and hunger for your company.

Poet. You overrate me for a foolish speech,
Or one that, by suggestion, clothes itself
From the rich wardrobe of receiving minds.

Rinaldo. The ring tests gold as well as acid does ;
No Lombard usurer is more acute
Than is my greedy ear.

Poet. I cannot stay :
I must away this evening to prepare
For leaving Florence early. In a month
I likely shall return ; and then will put
Your offered hospitality to proof.

Rinaldo. You shall not go till I have that bestowed
Which will your coming mount—a noble horse,
Than which no better is in Tuscany.
I praise the gift as token of regard.

[*Tommaso whispers to him.*

The Doctor of Florence.

Tommaso tells me many are without
That have not been received. For a short time
I'll leave you in old Frederico's care.
I thus shall save your sentiment for me.

Enter Players.

Rinaldo. [*Aside.*] He cast a stone among my settled
thoughts ;

They rise like a flock of crows.

Tommaso. The players, sir.

Rinaldo. To all and each, I greeting do extend—

[*Elena appears for a moment at a curtained entrance.*

Elena ! [*Rushes to the hangings, and sweeps them apart.*

Nothing ! Yet it was her face !

All. What did you see, my lord ?

Rinaldo. That face ! that face !

So sad, so pale.—O God ! can she be dead !

Belcolore. Whose face ?

Tommaso. Believe me, sir, you are not well ;

The guests are much disturbed ; come to the air.

Rinaldo. I am a loadstone to the things I hate.

[*Turns upon the guests.*

You spawn of venom'd toads, which do infect

The bush that shelters you ! you fear-struck fools !

Rinaldo,

Think you your bungling counterfeit to pass
Across the carpet of a Lombard dog?
I hold your friendship as I hold the lights
That smoke and flicker in my court and hall:
A puff extinguishes; unchecked, they 'd lay
My home in ashes!

[*To First Actor, with assumed laughter.*]

Your opinion on 't.

Belcolore. [*To Tommaso.*] He was but acting!

Tommaso.

Do not be deceived.

First Actor. It was too highly colored, sir.

Rinaldo.

Perhaps;

But artists, for the drying of their paints,
Allowance make; and, in addition, this:
Nature's reflection is less strong than she;
And so, for true effect, we must illumine
Her brilliant tints, and deepen sombre hues.—
Attend the picture's tone. O worthy sir!
There is, in realms invisible, a stage,
By iridescent fancy lit, or gloomed
By dark imagination; where there flit
Bright, airy spirits, or where spectres stalk
Reacting what has been—'t is Memory!
There Conscience, sole spectator of the play,
In calm repose, or brooding misery sits.

The Doctor of Florence.

Oh, must I ever view that bitter scene !
Strike up the music ! and on with the dance !
Why waste the fleeting moments of delight ?
Time marches to the beating of the heart.
Spin round ! spin round ! and so get cheaply drunk !
Reel ! reel ! in ecstasy !—that face ! that face !

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*Florence. A Room in an Inn.*

Enter ELENA.

Elena. I am so faint all things are in a whirl.
'T is true ! 't is true ! 't is true ! and even hope,
The last to fly the chillèd heart, has flown,
As every other joy, to sunnier climes.
If through the sleet of grief I could have seen,
Though far ahead, a glimmering of light,
The thought of welcome and a glowing hearth
Would have renewed my failing energy ;
But 't is shut off, and all is darkness now.
Most bitter woe whose only cure is death !
How can I bear time's slow and lagging pace—
Hours, days, years—when it doth seem
Another moment would unthrone my mind !
Oh, what a clinging garment is this life
To one that would disrobe and go to rest !
O God, keep me from suicide or madness ;
In this my hour of trial give me strength,

The Doctor of Florence.

That when the end—the welcome end—is come,

I may be still within thy gracious love.

I will be brave ; he bade me to be brave ;

I little thought I stood so much in need

Of courage. Yes, I will be brave ; I will be—

[Reaches the bed, and falls fainting upon it.]

Enter HERMIT and ANDREA.

Hermit. Thou shouldst have sooner wakened me,

Andrea :

It is near morning, and she might have called.

Andrea. I have not closed my eyes, and should have heard.

She told us not to enter till she rang.

And then your wound—

Hermit.

No word of that to her.

Hush ! she may be asleep.

[Discovers her.]

What can have happened ?

Daughter ! daughter ! Her clothing soiled with mud !

Delirious she must have ranged the streets.

I never can forgive myself for this.

1 Call Peronella in.

[Exit Andrea. Hermit places Elena in bed.]

Why did she wish

To be alone, and so dismiss them both ?

Rinaldo,

We all have secrets that we ne'er disclose
To closest confidants ; and there are times
When we communion with our souls would hold—
Times when our dearest friends intruders seem.
Had she not left the house, no mystery.
But it is done ; and reasons rarely cure
The act's disease. Sweet face : the one who could
Look in thine eyes and wrong thee is no man.

Enter PERONELLA and ANDREA.

Peronella. Is the poor lady worse ?

Hermit. I fear she is.

Didst thou hear any one go out last night ?

Peronella. I slept too sound to hear a falling tower ;
I was so tired, I lay down as I am,
Expecting to be called.

Andrea. I am to blame.

Hermit. Blame not thyself, Andrea ; for our deeds,
From the intention, their complexion take.

Elena. [*Recovering.*] Father, father.

Hermit. Well ? I am here, my child.

Elena. I thought at first that I awoke in heaven,
And that the angels bade me welcome there.

Hermit. [*Aside.*] Sweet visions ! the precursors of
the end

The Doctor of Florence.

To peaceful souls. [*To Elena.*] Didst thou go out last night?

Well, well: we 'll wait till thou art better, then.

Elena. Shall I be better soon?

Hermit. In heaven, yes.

My dear, dear child, you have not long to live.

Elena. My prayers are answered. Tell me, father, true:

Is it a sin to pray the Lord for death?

Hermit. No more than 't is to ask him for thy life,
When 't is a blessing.

Elena. Then it was not wrong.

Why weep you all? Death, to the innocent,

Must be as sweet as childhood's slumber is:

No doubts, no cares, no dread imaginings.

It is revealed to us through nature's law,

Which gives to only purity content,

That, in His kingdom, it is so ordained

That virtue need not fear to enter there.

There heart from heart can never be estranged;

There we shall meet—Rinaldo! O my love!

If I could see you once before I die!

Hermit. There, daughter, rest.

Elena. Oh, let me use the little time I have
In speaking to you: better so than wasted.

Rinaldo,

Come, kiss me, Peronella ; you have nursed
Me tenderly : you have so good a heart.

Peronella. A good heart, but a worn heart, lady dear.
[*Aside.*] I 'll bring the priest : her hand is cold as ice.
[*Exit Peronella.*]

Elena. Farewell, Andrea ; you have been to me
A watchful, loving brother.

Andrea. Would to God,
My mistress, I could an incision make,
And let my life blood flow into your veins
To give you health and vigor.

Elena. 'T is better not.
I have a last request.

Andrea. But tell me it.

Elena. It is that you will never leave Rinaldo.
You love him dearly ; and he loves you, too.
You know his moods and passions, and beneath
His true and tender heart. Will you stay by him ?

Andrea. As I do hope for mercy from above.

Elena. I would a message send to him ; but it
Might pain him. Should he ever ask for me,
Tell him I loved him better than my life ;
That heaven will seem lonely till he comes.
And, after I am dead, lay me to rest
With this dear locket nearest to my heart :

The Doctor of Florence.

It was his latest gift. Hold tight my hand ;
You drift away.

Enter Priest and PERONELLA.

[*Organ and choir heard.*

Peronella. Father, has she the sacraments received ?

Priest. Yes, Peronella.

Hermit.

All her faults appear

As virtues held, by greater virtue, sins—

The angels are no purer.

Peronella. [*Going to the bedside.*] Here is the priest.

Elena. Rinaldo wed, and not to me.

Priest.

My child,

Think not of worldly things, but of thy God.

Elena. I will try, father, but my heart is broke.

Priest. God's love and mercy are the spirit's balm.

[*A bell from the church is heard.*

Elena. What sounds are these ?

Priest. It is the consecration of the mass,

Which daily hath been offered up for thine

Eternal welfare. Is there aught, my child,

That troubles thee ?

Elena.

Father, I 've told you all,

And I am satisfied.

Priest.

Then, if for all thy sins

Rinaldo,

Thou dost renew thy sorrow, I again,
In His high name and by His holy word,
Forgive thee. [*Makes the sign of the Cross. All kneel.*]

Elena. The strains grow fainter, fainter.

Peronella. The cordial, doctor!

Hermit. 'T would be cruelty

To rough so smooth an ending by our art.

Elena. The voices of another choir grow loud—
Sweet, sweet music!

Priest. 'T is an angel choir.

[*Places a lighted candle in her hands, which
Peronella sustains, and lays a crucifix
upon her breast.*]

Elena. [*Partly rising.*] A light! a soft, bright
light! why it is morning. [*Dies.*]

Priest. Tibi, Domine, commendamus animam famulæ
tuæ ut defunctus sæculo tibi vivat; et quæ per fragili-
tatem humanæ conversationis peccata commisit, tu venia
misericordissimæ pietatis absterge. Per Christum Dom-
inum nostrum. Amen.

SCENE II.—*Servants' Hall in Rinaldo's House.*

Enter several Servants.

First Servant. I tell you that he is not so blind as a
bat or as a youth enamored of a crone. Besides, he

The Doctor of Florence.

can see with his ears ; he can read your thoughts from your inflection and your heart from your breathing. Secrets are not always safe from him though they be unworded. Many a time he has made me start by becoming the tongue for my bosom. Had I not been familiar with the sound of my voice, I should have believed that it was my mouth berating my brain for devising scurvy office for it.

Second Servant. He does not appear to notice anything, or to care for anything. He walks alone, eats alone, talks alone, and sleeps alone. If he knew that he was a cuckold, I do not think that he would be mute on the subject.

First Servant. You are one of those who imagine that the Lord has only one mould, and that the one in which they were cast. You think that our master's head is as hot as your own, which melts every thought, as soon as formed, into words that flow down and out. I have heard him say that the deepest thoughts are speechless ; that the Tongue is the spendthrift-nephew of the miser, Brain ; and that one becomes bankrupt in wisdom by being too liberal in speech. You can not see so far down as his heart every time he opens his mouth.

Third Servant. It will be well if, to rid themselves of him, they do not inform the authorities that he profanes

Rinaldo,

consecrated ground, and cuts up bodies buried with holy rites.

First Servant. The authorities will not trouble him. The lean people adore him ; the fat enroll him as one of themselves ; and the nobles fear that they will drop into their graves with a disagreeable thump if he fail to lower them in gently. What other man in Florence, when summoned by Messer Corso, would have sent the reply, "Tell him to hell by the shortest route ; I will attend him there."

Second Servant. Surely he is gone crazy ; and we are crazy if we do not seek employment elsewhere.

First Servant. Not I. I know his plague.

Second Servant. What is it ?

First Servant. He jilted Elena, the girl that came with that old man, and he regrets it. If his wife do not act more prudently, he will have good grounds for making away with her ; and then we shall have a better mistress.

Third Servant. God speed the day. My lady Belcolore is such a fiery wench she should have been sent to Tartary to hunt up Prester John.

Second Servant. Hist ! here she is.

Enter BELCOLORE.

Belcolore. Idling and gossiping as usual. Pray, are you paid for this ? Is there not work enough to busy

The Doctor of Florence.

you? Then I will dismiss some of you. To your duties. Were I as tardy in my pay as you are in your service, there would be some squealing. Since Filippo left, there has been nothing done. You piled too much upon his shoulders, and made him dissatisfied. [*To First Servant.*] When Signior Tommaso comes, tell him that I desire to see him. [*Exit Belcolore.*]

First Servant. Much work Filippo did, except at table.

Second Servant. Thank heaven that he has left.

Third Servant. May he not return until I wish him back.

Second Servant. She wants Tommaso. She leaves this order twenty times a day.

First Servant. Give her line ; when she is hooked, she will be landed. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A Room in Rinaldo's House.*

Enter RINALDO.

Rinaldo. My life is deepening to a tragedy.
The curse hath fallen on me : every thought,
Like a bewildered stranger in the streets,
Though free awhile, doth circuit to the start.
My food is tasteless ; and my converse lacks
Conjunction with my sin-engrossed mind.
The past, the present, and the future bear,
Like the Erinnyes, ever to my sight

Rinaldo,

Her white and pleading face : I saw it on
That fatal nuptial day—I see it now !
O fool ! fool ! fool ! How duped is he that yields
The cap a father wears before his hearth
For the tiara, crown, or wreath of green !
What have I sought ? I valued not the prize :
So weak the motives that incite to crime.
What can I do ? Is there no refuge ? Hark !
The voice of that old village priest doth sound,
As on the Sabbath I remember well,
“ Sweet is atonement to the contrite heart.”
Sweet, sweet indeed : oh, precious, precious words !
Why came they not before ? I have been one
Confined in a cell with bolts unshot,
And known it not. Oh, blessed, blessed thought !
I will atone ; nor give my reason time
To mangle this resolve. [Rings a bell.
My wife is false.
My own observance doth sustain the charge
In the *tamburo* of my judgment placed
By servants’ gossiping.

Enter Servant.

Go, sirrah, bid
Each member of my household come in haste.

[Exit Servant.]

The Doctor of Florence.

Where is Elena now? I learnt that she
Had not to home returned. She will forgive
When she is told my anguish; how my love,
Outstripping all the rank and sucking growths,
Like some tall tree in the Maremma, sways
With branches verdant in the purer air.
I hear her cry; I see the light of joy
Shine through her tears, as sunbeams through a shower.
Who knows but, tempered by adversity,
The end accomplished, troubles now may cease?
For surely the Artificer divine
Doth make some lives run molten, with design
Of casting useful implements for man.
Here are the knaves.

Enter Servants.

I summoned you, to say
That 't is of import and great urgency
I should discover where Elena is.
You gossips know her. To the one that brings
The news, I 'll give a thousand florins. Go!

[Exeunt Servants.]

Gold is the heathen deity that lifts
The rock that balks desire.

Enter ANDREA.

Andrea? welcome!
There is only one I rather would have seen.

Rinaldo,

Thou 'rt come in time : didst thou not hear me say
To find her, I 'd a thousand florins give?
When thou hast told me all, we will to horse ;—
But thou art from the village, art thou not?
Sit thou beside me here. Where hast thou been,
Thou truant?

Andrea. Master, I did follow her.

Rinaldo. Then thou know'st where she is! O noble
boy!

(I do not think I have deserved this joy!)
Look not so sad, Andrea ; I am changed :
I am not what I was, nor ever can be.
Elena's honor only shall be bounds
To my repentant acts. I 'll penance do
As dire as did the royal penitent
Betwixt Canossa's walls. How didst thou find her?

Andrea. She fled alone.

Rinaldo. Alone?

Andrea. The Hermit and myself, in quest of her,
Met near the Arno ; then together searched.
We traced her first to Lastra, and thence back
To Florence. Next, we did a rumor hear
That she was in a convent ; but 't was false.
Continual we walked the streets in vain,
Till once, as we were passing by a house,

The Doctor of Florence.

We heard a woman scream ; and, rushing in,
Beheld Tommaso and Filippo there
About to bear her off.

Rinaldo. What didst thou do?

Andrea. I drew my sword, and ran Filippo through.

Rinaldo. Thou shouldst be knighted by a public
act !

Tommaso ! what of him ? The dog escaped :
I missed Filippo, but Tommaso 's here.

Andrea. He drew, and fled.

Rinaldo. He fled from death to death !—

What of Elena ? tell me, what of her ?

Andrea. The shock was great ; but she did rally some,
Till we Tommaso's story did confirm
That you would wed ;

Rinaldo. Oh, what a villain I !

Andrea. Then slowly pined.

Rinaldo. But my repentance will
Restore the color to her pallid cheek,
The sparkle to her eye. Speak on, speak on.

Andrea. Upon your wedding-night she stronger
grew ;

And bid both Peronella and myself,
Who were attendant on her, to retire,
And not return until she rang a bell

Rinaldo,

That was in easy reach. So we withdrew.
I waited long ; and it was nearly dawn,
When, with the Hermit, I went in again.
We found her worse ; the fever very high ;
And, strange to tell, her night-robe flecked with mud,
As if she had been out of doors.

Rinaldo. 'T was she !

O heart, look on the product of thy deeds !
It is damnation deep—the imps of hell
No torture could devise so terrible.
How is she now ?—You weep ? she 's dead ! she 's dead !
[Gasps for breath.]

Andrea. He 's dying ! Master ! master !

Rinaldo. 'T will away :

This killed my father, and some day—some day ?
Hand me the poniard on the table there,
I would let blood.

Andrea. No, master, no ; not yet ;
Think of your soul ; she said you 'd meet in heaven.

Rinaldo. O God, why art thou called The Merciful ?
My guilty soul was full of penitence.
Yet art thou just : I did no mercy show.
Andrea, thou art right : I would not trade
This little piece of life for all the furs
Of Asia, the silks of Paris, and the cloths

Rinaldo,

Andrea. Think not of him, good master.

Rinaldo. Thank God, there is a place of pain eterne,
Else the unfeeling, in unfeelingness,
Were proof 'gainst punishment commensurate,
And retribution and revenge, but words !

Andrea. This passion will exhaust you.

Rinaldo. Dead ! dead ! dead !

Andrea. Do not cry so, master.

Rinaldo. O heaven, it is
An awful thing to feel, where enemies
Are countless ; friends so few, that one who loved
You dearer far than life is gone forever.
Oh, she was one within whose trusting heart
The virgin graces bloomed with sweetest fragrance.
She would have died to save me but an hour
Of such remorse. E'en when I cast her off
Into the world to starve, looked in my face
With a reproachful, yet forgiving look
That would have melted any beast but man.
How could I do it ? oh, how could I do it ?
She was entwined in the memory
With early years—grew up, as 't were, a part
Of all I was, or ever hoped to be.
She leaves a void that nothing else can fill.
She 'll come to me no more ; she 'll come no more.

The Doctor of Florence.

O God ! I can but cry "how could I do it?"

And let the question, unanswered, echo back.

Andrea. Be calm, master, be calm.

Rinaldo. I am not cruel : I could not crush a worm

Or wing the smallest insect, and not feel

That there was something waiting its return.

And yet, I could undo a human life—

The most unselfish, purest, gentlest life ;—

Not of an enemy (which might excuse,

In even guilt, the instinct of defence)

But of one who loved me through my injuries.

Enter TOMMASO.

Tommaso. What is the matter now ?

Rinaldo. O you black devil !

Tommaso. Why, what is this ?

Rinaldo. [*Partly drawing.*] I 'll send you down
to hell ! [*Falls back gasping.*

My heart is still ! beat damnèd organ, beat !

Andrea. Go ; leave him, sir, at once.

Tommaso. No ; let him writhe.

Ho, ho ; I see : you would relieve yourself

Of that uneasy burden, gratitude ;

And, seizing on a trifle for offence,

Repay the debt, and give your conscience peace.

Rinaldo,

Ay, abuse me ; turn me from your house :
You can not rob me of the cheering thought
That I have done you good. *[Exit Tommaso.]*

Andrea. Master ! master ! I 'll send the servants in,
And run and bring the nearest doctor here ;
For he is much distressed. *[Exit Andrea.]*

Rinaldo. *[Recovering.]* I do believe that there are
evil spirits,
Which find a lodgment in the human form,
And act their will. Of such am I possessed :
Strength in excess to compass hellish ends,
And none for righteous vengeance—Dead ? O God !

Enter Servants.

First Servant. Shall we attend you, sir ?

Rinaldo. *[Rising.]* Away ! away !
Falls back gasping into chair.

The Doctor of Florence.

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Rinaldo's House.*

Enter TOMMASO and BELCOLORE.

Tommaso. It is our only safety : he has grown
So passionate of late, it is to risk
Our life and limbs to spare him longer.

Belcolore. Indeed !
What did Andrea tell him ?

Tommaso. I do not know.
Too much, I fear, for cunning to displace,
And change the proper current of suspect.
At sight of me, he in a fury flew ;
And, had his violence not drained his strength,
He might have done me harm.

Belcolore. Then is it time
That, for our own protection, we should act,—
And sure, in self-defence, it is no crime.
I 'll mix the poison in his breakfast-cup.

Tommaso. 'T were better done at once : each hour
delayed
To existing chances of defeat gives suck,

Rinaldo,

And birth to new ones. Hark ! he is coming ;
We 'll go aside and spur invention on. [Exeunt.

Enter RINALDO, who rings a bell.

Rinaldo. A servant here !

Enter a Servant.

Has Bruno not arrived ?

Servant. He is outside, my lord.

Rinaldo. Bid him come in.

[Exit Servant.

'T is strange ; for now I am relieved to learn
That I, who have wronged others past amends,
Am wronged myself.
O friends turn false ; and enemies play foul ;
Make harlot of my wife ; rob me of wealth ;
Show light the deeds that have procured me fame,
And prove resultant honors undeserved ;
Let slip the hell-hounds that hunt i' the past,
And drive from cover long-repentred sins ;
Steal ! lie ! defame ! do anything that 's vile,—
And let me feel abused. Yet what so black
Against me could be done—

Enter BRUNO and PIETRO.

What do you here ?

Bruno. You sent for us, my lord,

The Doctor of Florence.

Rinaldo.

Why, so I did.

Well, have you any subject for my knife?

Bruno. Two, my lord.

Rinaldo. Fresh?

Bruno. The breath scarce out of 'em.

Rinaldo. 'T is well : I would not give a florin for
A score of carcasses such as the last.

The stench from it so roused my senses up,
Their clamor drowned the quiet voice of thought,
Turning the brain from god-like muse to nausea.

Bruno. We 'll warrant these are fresh ; and hard it was
To get them, too ; for though to bear the biers
They had but porters hired, and but one priest
To walk before and chant their requiem
(Most like two misers brought in rags to earth,
Whose grip upon their money-bags and friends
Death at the same time had loosed), yet was there one—
The only mourner, if I saw aright—
Who, when the last to go, some curious hags,
Had hobbled off in search of funeral meats,
As is their custom, fell upon the ground
And moaned for hours, like he had been retained
To do the grieving for lax relatives.
This fellow did we watch, till finally
He was borne senseless off. I think the knave
The self-same man—

Rinaldo,

Rinaldo. I care not for your labor :
I pay but for result.
Take this : I'll settle with you afterward. [*Gives a coin.*
Both. Our thanks, my lord.
Rinaldo. What will you do with that ?
Pietro. We'll have a jolly swill.
Rinaldo. A jolly swill ?
You show your kinship to the lowest brutes :
You gorge upon your kind.
Pietro. So do we all, my lord.
Rinaldo. Yes, so we do.
We who esteem ourselves as civilized
Are more depraved than the cannibals :
They man's unfeeling body do devour ;
We feed upon his hopes, his joys, his loves—
We feed upon his agonized soul.
Cursed be the joy that takes its root in woe.
Enough ! Prepare the bodies in the tower ;
I shall be with you presently.

Enter BELCOLORE and TOMMASO.

How now ?

Belcolore. What does this mean ?

Rinaldo. Softly ; our visitors.

Belcolore. These villains here ?

The Doctor of Florence.

Rinaldo. No one is a villain, love,
Who, being nothing, nothing doth profess.
These gentlemen are true philanthropists :
They take that only which we all discard.
But since their presence gives you such offence
(As best oft best offends), they will withdraw.

[*Motions to them to go ; exeunt Bruno and Pietro.*

Belcolore. What does this passion mean ?

Rinaldo. What passion mean ?

Belcolore. This reckless casting-off of friends.

Rinaldo. Of friends ?

There is no Cræsus in the heart's domain
That can afford to squander his humblest friend.

Belcolore. Then why do you play prodigal with
yours ?

Here is your noblest friend, who had been gone,
Leaving his vindication to slow time,
Had I not met him going, and prevailed ;
For to atone, atonement must be prompt ;
Not after bitter years have gnawed the heart.
Give every accusation 'gainst him form ;
For innocence has only that to fear
Which is concealed in the accuser's breast,
Or given out too vague to meet disproof.

Rinaldo. You are most eloquent. Were you a man,

Rinaldo,

Learned in the law, and were suit 'gainst me brought,
You should receive my present
To enter an appearance, and to stand
My friend throughout the cause.

Belcolore. You mock me, sir.

Rinaldo. Not so : true eloquence, like true religion,
Can not be mocked : the fool that makes the attempt
Mocks but the fool ; for reason, to a fool,
Is not a lucid substance, but reflects
A fool upon the fool. And thus we see :
The bigger fool, the more to make him laugh ;
No fool so poor but that he keeps a fool ;—
And so on till you tire. What do you wish ?

Belcolore. Your serious consideration, sir ;
For, though your humor—

Rinaldo. Tempt me not with praise ;
Lest, like a maid with an ear-fretting voice
Whom bored guests applaud, I sing again
And torture flatterers.

Tommaso. You wrong me, sir,
In thought.

Rinaldo. Treachery ! my heart's close confidant,
My face, has been a tattler to the world.

Tommaso. You wrong me most, in that you will not
grant

The Doctor of Florence.

A hearing to my plea, but hold me off
With words whose pitch and flection me arraign,
Yet whose sense makes defence impertinent.

Rinaldo. You shall have open court :
Yea ! though you do contend ingratitude
That gem of gems which stud the dome of heaven ;
And its opposing virtue that black crime
Which crusts the roof of hell—you shall be heard.

Tommaso. Then let us sit ; and, like a worthy judge,
Inclining neither way, still with a hope
That the accused, perforce of truth, may win,
Do you preside.

Rinaldo. My haunches long have ached
To rest upon a seat of justice, sir.

[*They sit down at a table.*]

Tommaso. Before to trial we proceed, my lord,
Take we a social cup to warm our hearts.

Rinaldo. Is it the custom of the bench ?

Tommaso. It is.

Rinaldo. It was the Frank's instruction to hold court
Before he ate his dinner.

Tommaso. 'T is night ; this, drink.

Rinaldo. Your point sustained : make every cup
appear
A welling spring—an emblem of our mercy.

Rinaldo,

Tommaso. [*Pours out the wine, and gives the poisoned cup to Rinaldo.*]

Here 's to the health of all !

Rinaldo. Stay ! [*They put down the cups.*]

There is a maxim in the law

(I cannot the authority recall),

In Latin, *Cujus est divisio*,

Alterius est electio, which rules

That he who makes division chooses last.

Though here this maxim is, in spirit, null,

Still, for the reverence that I have for form,

I would have it observed. I this cup choose.

[*Takes Tommaso's cup.*]

Excuse me, lady : in society

Your sex precedence has ; but not in law.

It was decreed the court should stop its ears

To such disturbers of the course of justice.

'T is your choice next. You 'll keep the one you have ?

So be it then. I have made note, my lord,

That the force of a law outlives its reason,

As the bark of a nut survives its meat.

What else are legal fictions but the shells

Of ancient laws whose kernels are decayed ?

But you grow pale at my wise showing ; come,

Here 's to the health of all !

The Doctor of Florence.

Why do you hesitate? the wine is good :
'T is Trebbiano, white and sweet as truth ;
The toast, of your proposing,

Tommaso. I am sick.

Rinaldo. Then drink ; 't will do you good.

Tommaso. I must retire.

Rinaldo. Fly your physician? by Galen's ghost !
Though sage Bologna has not set her seal
To attest me genuine, my deeds will vouch.
I do prescribe the wine.

Belcolore. Oh, let him go !

Rinaldo. [*Drawing.*]

Here is a sword—Sit where you are !—that might,
In proper grasp, have Monteaperto won ;
Yet, like a merchant's literary bent,
Has served to trip my heels. It may become—

Tommaso. My lord !

Rinaldo. Deception out ! the wine is poisoned !
Drink ! or I 'll probe your breast to find your heart.

Tommaso. Mercy ! I never did you such a wrong—

Rinaldo. No, no ; I am without the pale of wrong,
Where injury is justice ; 't is for her—

Tommaso. Your will was free : you were as bad as I.

Rinaldo. Worse ! Show me beguiled to think her
false ;

Rinaldo,

Disclose a misled virtue in my acts ;
Prove me your dupe, and all I have is yours.
Worse a thousand times ! but like two snakes
With mortal stings sunk in each other's coils ;
Or like two poisons whose antagonism
Robs both of lethal properties : so we—
I 'll be your antidote. Come, drink !

Tommaso.

Have mercy !

Mercy ! I am unshriven, unabsolved ;
If not my life, spare my immortal soul.

Rinaldo. Your soul ?

Could you to your foul actions add one crime
That would blow hotter hot damnation's fires,
I 'd let you live ; but no : you 're ripe for hell.
You will not drink ?

Tommaso. I drink ! I drink ! [*Drinks.*] O God !

I 'm lost ! help ! help ! murder !

Belcolore. Help ! murder ! help !

[*Exeunt Tommaso and Belcolore.*]

Enter Servants.

Rinaldo. You snails, you never crawled so fast before.

Out upon you ; begone ! [*Exeunt Servants.*]

Would I had drunk the poison in his stead.

To live for naught but living is to die :

The Doctor of Florence.

To be to beauty blind, to music deaf,
To fragrance smell-less, tasteless to the sweet,
And numb to pleasure's touch ; yet to exist
With every sense to every pang alive.
Why was I born ? my birth brought shame to her
That bore me, and my life has been a curse
To me and all I love. Why was I born ?
What had I prior to my being done,
That I should be created as I am ?
And, if created so, then why so placed ?
There are full many wretches worse than I,
Men that could murder and sleep soundly nights,
Who by their circumstances so are hedged,
They cause but little pain ; while I, who have
The elements of pity and remorse,
Am like a dread contagion that infects
The wholesome air and chokes the graves with dead.
Will it be so hereafter ? Will the evil
That is within me the virtue hold in thrall ?
May not death be a crucible in which
The most debasèd soul is analyzed,
The dross cast off, the divine components saved—
Not damned in lump ?

Enter ANDREA.

Andrea. Good master !

Rinaldo,

Rinaldo.

Well ?

Andrea.

My lord has fallen down

Gasping for breath !

Rinaldo.

Well, better men than he

Are dying now.—Andrea ! by my soul—

If still I have a soul—I knew thee not.

Oh, let me clasp thine honest hand in mine,

For, since her spirit is above the clouds,

There is no nobleness on earth but thine

That is not hostile to me.

Andrea.

By your leave,

I shall be always with you, master.

Rinaldo.

No :

Thy face—thy dear, familiar face—would be

A mirror for the past.

Andrea.

Oh, let me stay ;

My lady bade me promise when she died

That I would ever serve and care for you.

Rinaldo. Burst ! burst ! my breast, or I shall choke !

And stay thou shalt, and be my guardian angel.

We will together live, and keep a house

Where hunger shall be fed, pain eased, shame pitied,

Despair to courage cheered ;—where every one

That wears the sable livery of grief,

Bianco, Nero, Guelph, or Ghibelline,

The Doctor of Florence.

Shall find a sheltering home. In works humane,
The Misericordia shall not outdo.
Go ! go ! our hospital prepare.

Andrea. As you direct, good master ; but I fear
The Adimari will be here to-night ;
And very scant our means for a defence,
With but two servants left : the rest have gone
And say that you are mad.

Rinaldo. They are not mad that say it. Let them
come :
He that has nothing need not bolt his doors.

Andrea. You have your life, dear master, and your
goods.

Rinaldo. My life is ended, and—

Andrea. What have you done ?

Rinaldo. Be not alarmed :
I have not charged my conscience with that sin
Which, bordering on death, perdition seals—
I am unhurt.

Andrea. Then let us fly from here.

Rinaldo. I will not go ; why should I fly from them ?
Death 's but a gardener that lops off this life
And grafts the scion on immortal stock.

Andrea. O master !

Rinaldo. But I do not think they 'll come.

Rinaldo,

He was a man of such a doubtful end, [Bell heard.
His house should me reward for giving him
A reputable close. But it is late ;
The Abbey's bell is striking now : to bed ;
Thou art in need of rest. Thy body lags,
And, like a drooping comrade, would succumb
But for thy mind's encouragement ; thine eyes
Show like two blood-streaked warriors ; they have fought
So long with Sleep they can with honor yield.
Good-night, Andrea ; get thee to thy couch.

Andrea. And you will here remain ?

Rinaldo. I have within my cranium an owl,
Which blinks i' the day, but steady sees at night ;
And I must gain more knowledge by my knife,
If I would wrong not those that trust my skill.

Andrea. They will seek vengeance here.

Rinaldo. Well, should they come,
Stand not between ; they seek my life alone.

Andrea. I fear not for myself.

Rinaldo. I know thou dost not ; fear not then for
one
That craves what they would give him—but they 'll
not,

They will not come ; of that be thou assured.
And so good-night ; my faithful friend, good-night.

The Doctor of Florence.

Andrea. Good-night, then, master.

[*Aside.*] I 'll not sleep to-night ;

The Adimari surely will be here. [*Exit Andrea.*]

Rinaldo. To feed the hungry and the naked clothe.

The thought already on my judgment sours,
Like ill-digested food.

How speedy, then, would the reality,
With its attendant troubles, turn to bile !
To feed the hungry and the naked clothe.

Why, 't is to make of charity a post,
Where every lousy vagabond may lean
And scratch his back ; to give in full to those
That naught do merit, to atone to one
Who, all-deserving, nothing did receive.

How quick a plan mocks its conception here,
And, by its self-destruction, adds a weight

To the o'er-burdened mind !

Exit.

SCENE II.—*House of Frederico Adimari.*

Knocking. Enter two Servants.

First Servant. Hold up the light ! You waste the days the Lord has allotted you in belching and snoring. Have I not told you that Death is the murderer and Sleep the robber of Life, and that Gluttony is the abettor of both ? There be plenty of time hereafter,

Rinaldo,

God willing, for sleeping. Had you been spryer, our master would have made you keeper of his hawks—he promised me as much—but you would make a better eater of his capons. [*Knocking.*] Who 's there? Would I had been a capon.

Second Servant. Alas, father, I should have eaten you.

First Servant. How could you have eaten me, you saucy loon, not being born? Your victuals have ousted your wit.

Second Servant. I do not, like pursy Age, carry my wit in my belly, father.

First Servant. You will carry a welt elsewhere, if you are not careful. You are apt only in unfilial replies. [*Knocking.*] Now don't stand gaping there, but go and call my young lord. Give me the light.

[*Exit Second Servant,*

It may be the Bordoni are in arms: I'll not unbolt until I know more of our visitors. [*Knocking.*] Who 's there?

Belcolore. [*From without.*] Open! in God's name, open!

First Servant. A woman's voice; some ruse of the Bordoni. No, my dear mistress: I have been too long in service; you may rap till you peel your knuckles.

The Doctor of Florence.

Belcolore. [*From without.*] Ho ! help ! help !

First Servant. She 'll wake the whole street with this uproar.

Enter RICCARDO and others with swords.

Riccardo. What is the matter ?

First Servant. Some one is thumping on our door as if it were a cheap virginal.

Riccardo. Why have you not opened it ?

First Servant. A trick of the Bordoni, may be.

Riccardo. I looked from the window ; it is only a woman ; draw the bolts. [*Servant opens the door.*]

Enter BELCOLORE.

Belcolore. Where is Riccardo ?

Riccardo. Here.

Belcolore. You 've heard the news :

I see that you are weaponed. Cruel deed !

Let our revenge be speedy as the drug

That stopped his heart.

Riccardo. Who ? which ? how ? when ? and what ?

I nothing know, except this foolish man

Mistook you for an enemy's decoy,

And roused us up. Perchance the doctor has,

By blunder, swallowed his own medicine :

Just ground for fear.

Rinaldo,

Belcolore. No, no : your cousin 's murdered !

Riccardo. By whom ?

Belcolore. My husband !

Riccardo. My surmise was right,

Save in the man : Tommaso must have been

So very drunk, the cups revolved about.

Enter FREDERICO.

Frederico. What is it, son ?

Riccardo. Tommaso 's killed.

Frederico. When ? how ?

Belcolore. To-night, by poison from my husband's
hand.

A cruel murder ! Haste ! he will escape.

Riccardo. [*To a Servant.*]

Go call our friends and relatives to arms ;

I 'll wait them here.

Servant. I think they are alarmed. [*Exit Servant.*]

Frederico. Be not so rash : 't is best to let the law

Take its impartial course. [*To a Follower.*] Go you
and tell

The Gonfalonier or Priors the report

You here have heard. [*Exit Follower.*]

Riccardo. That officer, with his

Plebeian company shall find that we

The Doctor of Florence.

Have made as thorough work as did our sires
At Monte Croce. 'T would our name disgrace
To have the meanest that doth bear it struck,
And not revenge the blow—by steel, not law.

Frederico. For me, I would not my physician lose
For fifty nephews of Tommaso's brand.

Riccardo. Your ailment, father, is within your head ;
And medicine, like water, runs down hill.

Enter Retainers.

[*To Belcolore.*] Is he prepared? How many followers?

Belcolore. His servants only.

Riccardo. Then we need not wait
The coming of the rest.

Belcolore. Haste, gentlemen ;
I 'll lead you where he is. [*Exit Belcolore.*

Riccardo. Attend with flambeaux :
We will a torch-light invitation bear
This Æsculapius to sup to-night
With Jupiter or Pluto. Follow me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in Rinaldo's Tower. The
Bodies of the Hermit and Elena, Covered with
Sheets, upon two Tables.*

Present BRUNO and PIETRO.

Bruno. Now they are ready for Master Rinaldo.

Rinaldo,

Pietro. We should receive a double price for these : they look as if they had died on the tables.

Bruno. We shall, I warrant, be well paid.

Pietro. We should be sure of that, did we take the locket from her neck.

Bruno. I would not touch it, were it ten times its worth, and ten times that. I dreamed that I took a locket from a corpse, and it destroyed all luck.

Pietro. I am certain that it will charm.

Bruno. You are ?

Pietro. It will charm my gullet with the drinks that it will buy. I 'll not leave it here. [*Approaches the body.*] Did not her body move ?

Bruno. No.

Pietro. I swear I saw it move !

Bruno. Come, let us go. There is something wrong when the dead moves uneasy ; and I 'd not meet Rinaldo at this hour ; for he has lost his wit, and may be dangerous. [*Exeunt.*

Enter RINALDO with a light.

Rinaldo. How the wind howls to-night : it sweeps
and moans
Through the deserted ruins of my heart ;
The rain falls chilling there—no present joy,
No recollection of a noble deed,

The Doctor of Florence.

To shut it out. Ay, whistle ! whistle ! whistle !
Oh how much misery can be pent up
In a single human breast ! Poor, wretched girl,
How lonely must thy loving heart have been
On such a night as this !—in every gust
To hear the wail of Memory and of Hope ;
To know—O God ! I must not think of her ;
For these wild thoughts are cancers to my brain.
Courage ! let me but look upon the gloom,
And all its terrors vanish. [*Pulls aside the curtain.*
No star is out ; the misty vault appears
The haze of distance. It is such a night
As makes one feel heaven has cut earth adrift
And left her floating lone and desolate.

[*Draws the curtain to.*

Away remorse and melancholy thoughts !
Ambition, fiend ! thou 'st led me into hell,
Make me proof 'gainst its fires.

[*Approaches the body of the Hermit.*

The knaves have done their well-paid duty well.
I charged them bring me subjects fresh from life
That I the gaoler, Sorrow, might surprise
Ere he discovered his prisoner had fled.
The mysteries of life through death ; well, well ;
Where are my knives ?

[*Takes a knife from a case, and tries the edge.*

Rinaldo,

'T is duller than remorse ;
Yet keen enough—peace, peace, I must to work.
The mysteries of life through death?—Perhaps.

[Draws the covering from the Hermit's face.]

Great God ! you startled me, my agèd friend ;
I scarce can breathe : let me have air !

[Tears open his doublet.]

So thus it is we meet. What say you now
Of charity to man ? To him you gave
What he could ne'er return, nor you regain—
Your scanty share of life. Yea ! gave him all
To minister to his pleasure ; yet for means
To furnish wassail, he profanes your grave
And coins the body worn out in his service.
Behold your pupil !—one that owes you all—
Behold him with the edgèd steel prepared
To mutilate your corse.

No, no, old master !

No ! I could not score the smallest vein,
Though it would trickle rubies—not for life.
I have, I know, been cruel past expression ;
Yet could the anguish of a soul with grief
From its conception nourished, twinned with shame—
Could it to pity melt the wrath of heaven,
I might have hope of pardon. I have had

The Doctor of Florence.

No sentiment abiding ; known no joy
But on the morrow sickened on my sight,
Like morning remnants of a night's carousal.
Alas ! I have been a benighted bark,
Driven here and there by warring elements,
With nothing, nothing like the fixed star,
By which to shape my course.

Look not so stern.

You know my crime, but not my punishment.
Crazed by day ; at night, most penitent ;
Inordinate passion and undue remorse
Alternately usurpers of my soul ;
My sleep, the haunted forest of those ghouls,
The creatures of a self-unpardoned sin,
Which, in the ghastly pallor of our dreams,
Prey on the moving vitals of the mind.
No peace ! no rest ! To wake ; to realize
That at that very hour, at some set spot,
Which an unbounded knowledge would disclose,
She wept, or restless slept—perhaps was dying !
And then to have the wild resolve, which throbs
With such remorseful pity and new love,
It scarce can brook inaction till the dawn,
At morning change to vacillating weakness.
To rouse at last, urged by resistless impulse,

Rinaldo,

And fall back shuddering at the cry, "Too late!"
Were you my most malignant foe, old friend,
You could but bid me live again the past.

[*Draws the covering over the body.*

This has enervated me quite; still will I seek,
In unremitting work, relief.—To work!
There is another body; may it be
The corpse of some unfeeling wretch, whose crimes
Have writ black records on his hellish visage;
Some base adulterer; some murderous fiend—

[*A bell tolls.*

What bell is that? 'T is the Campana tolling.
Well, let them fight that love each other not:
Wage not a war where victory is defeat.

[*Is about to draw the covering from Elena's
body, but stops.*

How strange I feel! my knees with faintness ache;
Chill perspiration oozes from my scalp;
I have within a yearning to cry out,
Like one that has his terror long contained,
Till that it painful swells and bursts in frenzy!
Yet what I dread I know not: it is dead.
A thrill heroic through my system runs;
Come, let me see your face!

[*Pulls the covering from her face.*

Elena! O!—

[*Falls.*

The Doctor of Florence.

[*An increasing noise outside is heard, and Andrea, with drawn sword, rushes in.*

Andrea. Fly, master, fly ! the servants both are slain,
And I am wounded. You may yet escape !
He has gone ! I can a little stay them here,
And give him chance for flight.

[*Bolts the door, and stands by it with sword ready.*

The one who is
Most eager in pursuit shall fall the first.

[*The door is burst open ; Belcolore rushes in ;
Andrea stabs her ; Riccardo and others
of the Adimari, with torches and weapons,
enter.*

Riccardo. Down with the dog !

[*They fight ; Andrea is overpowered and held.*

Andrea. Farewell, kind master ; fly !

Riccardo. Seize on the murderer !

Follower. He has escaped !

Riccardo. I heard a voice this way ; hold, there he
lies !

Follower. He is but feigning : thrust him with your
sword.

Riccardo. [*Stooping over Rinaldo.*]

I do not feel his heart beat. Ah ! he wakes !

Rinaldo, The Doctor of Florence.

Rinaldo. [*Partly rising.*] Elena ! God ! mercy !

[*Dies.*

Riccardo.

Sheathe your swords,

Good gentlemen : grim Death has interposed

His shield invincible to earthly points.

Sonnets.

Sonnets.

COUNTER MELODIES.

Listen ! that southern strain which hovers still,
With slumberous beat, upon the evening air
Hath many comrade melodies more rare
Than it, their sweet-voiced leader—tunes that trill
In one tone-colored flock that waked would fill
These hills with florid echoes : everywhere
Doth vibrant nature kindred carols bear,
Which, separate heard, seem weak and volatile.

Thus, linked to memories is each soulful lay,
Which, sounding singly, may inspire us not,
Yet o'er a minstrel have a wondrous sway.
Ah, when at last the mounting mind is brought
To one great concord in which all things play,
The world dissolves, and self thins to a thought.

Sonnets.

A PARTING.

Love be the winged usurper of this hour !

See, Helen, how the harvest-moon doth rain
Her amorous beams upon the sleeping plain,
Which mellows golden in the silvery shower.
Ah, dearest, when we part the lives that flower
With intertwinèd stems, 't is hard to feign
That frosty Sorrow is dethroned amain,
And feel no presage of his blasting power.

A sweet remembrance be this glassing stream

That glides so swiftly to the heaving vast,
Where thou wilt come and of thy lover dream,
Thy widowed shadow on its waters cast ;
And these blue depths that nature's confine seem,
With mirrored stars, shall memory the past.

Sonnets.

THE SIEGE OF MALAGA.

A Moslem sky, a crescent and one star,
The star of love in twilight's violet hue,
Yet ruddy combats rise in Fancy's view
'Twixt Spanish sword and Moorish scimitar.
The lombards roar, and catapults afar
Send globes of wildfire streaming from the blue
In meteoric showers, which soon renew
The gallant sallies and the shouts of war.

Fair Malaga reduced !—behold the scene :
Triumphal entry, gold from captives wrung,
A tilt of torture with bamboos made keen,
Arabian maidens to her favorites flung
Through courtly bounty of a Christian queen ;
And hark ! the *Gloria in Excelsis* sung.

Sonnets.

THE MOON'S ECLIPSE.

The wind blows softly 'neath a sky serene,
The moon with greenish circles glides as slow
As this calm river that doth seaward flow
Like sorrow stilled by music ; now is seen
A shadow creeping o'er Diana's sheen,
Then changing colors till of copperish glow,
As though Apollo his sweet voice did throw
Through filmy disk upon a silvery screen.

The silent moments trip as beauteous dreams,
A crescent soon begins the woods to lave,
And then the orb in rounded splendor gleams ;
The nymph is slipping to a watery grave,
But on the morrow, with celestial beams,
She will rise dripping from the eastern wave.

Sonnets.

THE LOON.

Ungainly bird ! when limping on the land,
Or when aërial flirts thy pinions dare :
Thy puny vans were never made to bear
A flight fantastic, nor thy legs to stand
In upright posture on the unyielding strand.
Cold-nurtured, thou dost fly the summer's glare :
Wild are thy notes that pierce the darkened air,
And trumpet an approaching storm at hand.

Yet art thou beautiful when seen at rest
On dreamy billow chanting thy low croon ;
Or swimming swift ; or diving 'neath the crest
Of some wild wave, and reappearing soon,
Thy black wings folded by thy snowy breast—
Wisely enjoying nature's single boon.

Sonnets.

SLAVES OF THE LAMP.

Enchanted lamp ! toward whose alluring light
A miller-moth is flying from the gloom
That drapes a corner of this cheerless room,
Why sear the wings inspired by thee to flight ?
This moth may be the ghost of some afrite
That, wanning, labored in thy lethal fume
To gem those numbered windows which illumine
Thought's wondrous palace builded in the night.

What need in death have genii of the brain—
Those homeless palace-builders? Tirelessly
Time hurls his legions 'gainst their works in vain,
And they, dear sprites, can ne'er returning see
How well they wrought, nor ever serve again
That mighty bird—the roc of poetry.

Sonnets.

THE KNIGHT OF THE BROKEN LANCE.

'T is bold to battle in the lists of Fate
Where our defeat is certain : when the blood
Flows through its channels in rebellious flood,
And every passion, scorning to berate,
Appeals to arms 'gainst wrongs predestinate,
'T is then, with lance in rest for fated good,
I spur upon a champion ne'er withstood,
And wounded fall, gasping unconquered hate.

There is a gulf between us, dearest heart,
No earthly bridge can arch ; yet when my fears
Inspire abandon and a flight to art,
The iridescent span of song appears,
Born of the love-light shining through my tears,
O'er which winged messengers like this can dart.

Sonnets.

DOTAGE.

How loath are we, when life is nearly sped,
To sit us down in patience, and to feel
That Fortune stands upon a moveless wheel !
Ambition quick, and vigor all but dead,
“To arms !” the cry, with every vassal fled.
Sharp are the pangs for sin or erring zeal :
In weakness, not in suppliant strength, we kneel,
And vengeance falls on an unhelmèd head.

We know not sorrow till we have a past,
Nor deep despair till nothing can assuage,
Nor chill, nor misery till we feel the blast
Of thanklessness, then impotence of rage ;
And of all the follies, that of sickliest cast
Is our self-love, the last amour of age.

Sonnets.

A COLONIAL MANOR.

A grand old mansion with an air devout !
How thick the trees by fragrant lawn's decline ;
And what a picture are the lowing kine,
Knee-deep in stream where dart the speckled trout.
It seems, with mind enfreed from needy doubt
And girt with beauties that each thought refine,
That we could write full many a noble line
The world would read until its lamp went out.

Wealth never will be ours ; why joy resign ?
These fields where rosy husbandry doth ply,
This park where sylvan pleasure dreams supine,
Yea, this embowering, autumn-tinted sky,
We hold, my comrade, as estate divine,
Through the spirit tenure of a poet's eye.

Sonnets.

A PRAYER.

Father, I pray to thee for strength, not light ;
Life's earthly path appears illumined to me,
Though birth and death are dark with mystery.
Thou know'st how often through the memoried night
Tears streaked with blood dim my bereavèd sight
For one that is no more—how sad to be
Like mateless bird above the moaning sea,
With wounded wing, in slowly drooping flight.

O make my spirit like this autumn day,
When earth seems friendly with the doming sky,
That these care-fingered locks may fade to gray
As these trees change, and, changing, beautify ;
That as these maple leaves, which rustling pay
A golden debt to nature, I may die.

Sonnets.

A MOONLIGHT RIDE.

Like guide-posts standing where the roads divide,
These lines will point our musings when astray
To sweet companionship : the mist that lay,
A veil enhancing, o'er the lowlands wide,
The rush-lit cots where museless rustics bide,
The smooth, white road that seemed to slip away,
The scent of cattle and of fresh-mown hay—
All thrill my sense as on that silvered ride.

Hark to the humble minstrels hid from sight !
And note the softened gray of that huge boulder
Sloping to this calm lake, half shade, half light ;
Draw closer, love : the air is growing colder,
And I by touch our spirits would unite,
For mine, dear maid, is many cares the older.

Sonnets.

KNIGHTS OF THE TEMPLE.

Brothers-in-arms ! what emblem on our shield
Will blazon fellowship ? We know each eye
In wasting siege, not when it flashes high
Through visor bars upon some desperate field.
Have care, bold knight, ere you in combat wield
The vengeful sword, lest flushed with victory
You loose his helmet thongs, and blanching see
One of your Order with his brave eyes sealed.

War not with one that wears the woeful cross
While sacred tombs by Saracens are trod,
Who shout for Islam and its crescent toss.
Sound trumpet ! break them with an iron rod !
'Gainst Moslem foes a death is glorious loss !
Laissez aller !—It is the will of God !

Sonnets.

SHELL BEACH.

Behold a world of wonders to explore !

 This shell whose builder long hath passed away,
 Held to thine ear, oft breathes a mournful lay,
Like winds round ancient ruins covered o'er
With creeping mystery : now the distant roar
 Hails from a realm where nymphs in azure play
 On wild sea-waves, like rainbow-tinted spray
That sweeps those billows bursting on the shore.

Thou dost not dream the depth from which arise

 The sounding shells of song upcast by thought,
Nor deem their murmurs, soft as summer sighs,

 The deep-sea echoes of a soul distraught ;
Yet, sweet, I would not change those glancing eyes
 That seek for love and, finding, seek for naught.

Sonnets.

A MOONLIGHT WALK.

The frogs and crickets sound as in a dream,
And near a boat-house on the river's shore,
As darkly closed as though Death walked before,
I watch the moon's reflection in the stream—
A plastic globe a-heaving: lights that gleam
Along a drive sink shafts like burnished ore
In waters that by western bank are hoar,
And, though in summer, partly frozen seem.

On through the arch of rock and round a bend
Till startled by—"where are you going, sir?"
I tell the guard an aimless course I wend,
Then onward rove, inhaling fragrant air,
Striving with nature every thought to blend,
Yet haunted by a ghostly whisper—*where?*

Sonnets.

THE DESERT.

A hot film trembles o'er the glistening plain,
And from the pulsing heat mirages rise—
Dark forests, bluish lakes, and cooling skies—
Like ghosts of subjects by a tyrant slain.
The camels groan ; the sweltering Bedouins drain
The bitter water-skins, and shroud their eyes
With white bernouse, but vain is every guise :
Life seems an alien through the Sun's domain.

One streamy vale each palmer long foresees,
With rainbow-tinted peaks on either side ;
Where plumèd birds attune to odorous breeze,
And oleanders bloom in crimson pride
By olive groves and manna-dropping trees—
How far to Wady Musa, Arab guide ?

Sonnets.

THE POET.

The poet hath a power divinely great :

He stretches forth his hand, the wind doth blow
And leave a pathway through a sea of woe ;
He leads from bondage those enslaved by Fate,
And with love's branches sweetens bitter hate ;
He gently smites the stony heart, and lo !
The tears of pity and of mercy flow,
As gushed the waters when with rod irate

The prophet smote the rock. Inspired Right,
If he doth raise his arms, makes Error fly ;
And on the summit of his art, where light
Eternal shines, Divinity draws nigh.

Though passion stay his entrance, from the height
A land of promise spreads beneath his eye.

Sonnets.

A NIGHT'S CAROUSAL.

Rich as the spring of sparkles in the wine,
His ravished mind with bubbling fancy teems—
Fancy that poured in crystal verse redeems
A youth mislived and spirits life's decline.
Then final bubbles burst, and welling brine
Rolls down his pallid cheeks in maudlin streams
From sober eyes that note the mirrored gleams
Of struggling reason till themselves repine.

His powers are swooning, when with sudden heat
He waves adieu to friends that held aloof
When timely coming would have checked defeat ;
And as he leaves that soul-deluding roof
He hears a wagon rumbling through the street,
And feels the fresh gray morning's chill reproof.

Sonnets.

A DREAM.

What words can move like relics of the dead ?

I dreamed I stood within a scanty room,
So dark that first was seen a chilling gloom
Which gathered into objects : life had fled,
Yet books and papers, in confusion spread,
And that last song revealed a living tomb
Where bitter-sweets of fancy late did bloom—
Impartial flowers !—and slimy sorrows bred.

Methought the eye beheld on further look

A chair with waiting arms, a likeness sweet,
The markers left within a favorite book,
The half-worn shoes that cased those weary feet ;
And then I woke, for gusts my window shook,
And on the panes I heard the wintry sleet.

Sonnets.

A SQUALL.

The lumbering billows sprawl upon the sand ;
The prickly boughs of yonder scrubby trees
Scarce stir beneath the salt, marsh-scented breeze
That steals like light across the level land.
A rumble in the West ! dun sheets expand
Cracked by the zigzag lightning, and one sees
Miltonic skirmish o'er the distant leas ;
Then seaward roll the clouds in threatful band.

O'er creeks and bending reed-grass sweeps the blast,
O'er dwarfish pines that wave their arms in glee,
O'er silvered shore, and smites the surges last
That show like smoking ruins of the sea.
Now fall the quickening rain-drops, and the scene
Fades as a picture from a magic screen.

Sonnets.

LIKE THAT STRANGE BIRD.

Like that strange bird in wild, untimely flight,
Now darting like a shadow o'er the moon,
My Fancy fain would fly ; but oversoon
'T would leave the happy range of girlish sight,
More lonely since unseen.—This bounteous light
Gives every needy thing a silver boon
And makes it rich in beauty : surely Noon
Is masking in the mantle of the Night.

How like thy lover doth this willow seem !
While scented breeze and crickets charm the lea,
Behold ! he fondles the responsive stream
That glorifies his image : when winds are free
He sighing wakes from love's exalting dream,
And frets her breast with spiteful gayety.

Sonnets.

RETROSPECTION.

When musing on the verses I have penned,
Like thoughtful mother o'er a sleeping child
That by some barren neighbor is reviled
As one that ne'er can win the world's commend,
Then do the lines disclose a restless trend,
A touch too much of hate, a stroke too wild
That shows a spirit still unreconciled
To starless darkness after life's strange end.

Yet, like a mother proud of that sad face,
Endeared forever through maternal pains
And those sweet sins of youth, I calmly trace
A stream of love that swells in icy chains,
A growing power, a sweep of subtile grace,—
And biding trust o'er fitful doubting reigns.

Sonnets.

APPLE BLOSSOMS.

Well I recall the sunset of that day—
It seemed God's masterpiece ! So heedlessly
You brake these blossoms from the mother tree,
But soon with girlish tenderness did say
You had fordone their purpose ; then in play
Bade me embalm them in some elegy ;
And now I write what you can never see,
A wail for your young life which passed away.

Its mission incomplete. Ah, faded flowers,
Though scarce a trace of beauty you preserve,
And have no fragrance save of happy hours,
No dewy drops but tears that me unnerve,
Your death atoned for waste of fruitful powers—
It thrilled a soul the angels love to serve.

Sonnets.

PIKE'S PEAK.

What Manitou ruled upon this awful height,
With bludgeon armed, in grizzly skins arrayed,
When classic Jove his trinal empire swayed
From Mount Olympus?—Sing the ears in fright,
The heart throbs wildly, and the reeling sight,
Allured to fatal leap, averts dismayed.
O ever thus the mortals that invade
The ether of the gods shall feel its blight.

'Tis hailing on the peak, yet far below
The sunny prairie spreads to deepening blue;
Cold gleam the seven lakes on south plateau,
And westward, through a shower of purple hue,
In snowy range the sunlit mountains glow.—
Who would not brave the gods for such a view?

Sonnets.

UNUTTERABLE THOUGHTS.

Could I unutterable thoughts give speech—
The passion, the unspeakable unrest
That ofttimes surge within my throbbing breast,
And 'twixt my heart and action wash a breach,
What rage, what struggles would the telling teach !
O for the power to word my feelings blest !—
The great salt sea of pity—all that 's best
Within my nature swelling o'er its beach.

Alas ! the deepest thoughts that mortals know
Are past their utterance or their control :
Like mighty oceans do they ebb and flow,
And in contented bosoms placid roll,
Or, their strong tides by adverse winds of woe
Roused into fury, burst upon the soul !

Sonnets.

FAME.

What matter if no living soul be stirred
By aught these artful cells of verse contain?—
The rhythmic clanking of a minstrel's chain,
The outcast years that huddle in each word.
The breathing present will be sepulchred,
And from these tower walls deviced with pain,
A voice, unheeded through a jealous reign,
In Time's impartial session shall be heard.

Pah ! why should Fancy feed on juiceless lies ?
Come, Fame, when life in spicy breeze can scud
Past singing islands, under amorous skies ;
For who, to drift upon a century's flood
That will its own song-laden barks disprize,
Would sit in hell and dip his pen in blood ?

Sonnets.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Behold the mightiest mortals mouldering here!

Doth not from Gothic arch appall the sight,
But quavers in the window-hallowed light
As if Death whispered it ; the thought austere
Chills earthly pride to spiritual fear,

As when we read, with musing recondite,
The silver-ciphered, sapphire page of night,
And weigh the import of our own career.

O God, this thrill !—our vision doth expand,
As sunshine o'er the clouded ocean flies,
And, for a glance, we seem to understand
The countless mysteries of earth and skies,
As though some healing, supernatural hand
The second time had stroked our puzzled eyes.

Sonnets.

TO KATHLEEN.

Love's mighty passion hath usurped my brain,
And struggles for expression, like a soul
That would Life's liberator, Death, control
And rove encumbered with a fleshly chain.
To-night my swelling bosom words profane,
For moonlight streams upon a distant shoal,
And on the beach the bursting billows roll
A changeless yet an ever fresh refrain.

Thou sweet, immortal melody of love,
With sorrows of a vanished minstrel fraught,
How vacant thy recurring measures prove !
O sea ! O moon ! O stars ! O heart distraught !
Child-like, I can but name the things that move,
And leave the intervals to silent thought.

A SINKING SHIP.

Upon a rescuing vessel's bridge I creep,
And see my own ship in mid-channel sink :
The stern first settles like a sandy brink,
Then o'er the fires the briny waters sweep,
And in a shroud of steam the bow doth leap
Skyward, and disappears : from eyes I shrink,
Eyes kind and yet unloving—O to think
The hoard of youth lies buried in the deep !

Dear friend, I know all you would tell me—all :
How vain it is to feel so lone and wild,
How weak before an earthly blow to fall :
Within there is a priest, by naught beguiled,
Who censures me in terms that oft appall,
And smiles at times as on a wayward child.

Sonnets.

POVERTY BEACH.

Alone at night within a maze of creeks !
In vain I scull with phosphorescent oar,
Oft blenching at the nearing ocean's roar,
While swarms of insects flesh their pestering beaks.
A light revolving casts long guiding streaks,
But, ah ! between are cuts and reedy shore ;
I rise and peer as I have peered before,
Then, sitting, rest—the worn-out bottom leaks.

Well, should I drift into those beryl roads,
It would a lesson to landlubbers teach—
My pondering head upon my bosom nods
Like over-burdened bow.—I know this reach !
It leads to welcome in those dear abodes,
But languor bids me sleep upon this beach.

Sonnets.

TO AN APE.

Hallo, ape ! why dost thou grin at me
As though suppressing philosophic mirth ?
Art thou so vain of thy illustrious birth,
Thou hairy limb of my ancestral tree ?
That those were nobler times I must agree—
Those frolic days when monkeys manned the earth,
When nature's creamy brew gave bibbers girth,
And bondless love begat posterity.

I, too, with plaguing vermin do contend,
My itchy friend ; I, too, have learned distrust,
Yet on a pleasure-bounty must depend ;
Into iron cages we have both been thrust,
Where we can climb and chatter till the end ;
We shall be one, proud ape, when we are dust.

Sonnets.

A SUNSET.

Another day is closing, gray and cold,
And ghostly mists are gathering on the lakes,
When lo ! the splendor of a sunset breaks,
Like sudden joy upon a sorrow old.
As in some gleaming cave of magic mould,
Where rays unearthly shone on aureate leaks,
Behold, illumed by slant Promethean streaks,
A vault of sapphire dripping with living gold.

The east, alas ! unfolds a sombre view ;
Nor doth a promise greet the questioning sight :
The rolling vapors veil the orient blue,
And catch no glory from the western light.—
O will they, changing, ever change their hue?—
Courage, my east-bound soul : 't will soon be night.

Sonnets.

A SAIL ON A SUMMER SEA.

The joys of daylight perish in the night
Like sweet ephemeral flowers : O Fancy, keep
A scene on sunlit waters as they sweep
Apast a phantom prow, where near a sprite
There lolls a swarthy slave, whose roving sight,
Like sacred dove above the leafless deep,
Returns to her as though for restful sleep,
And on her jeweled finger first doth light.

E'en as I muse, deep choral strains arise
That seem a dirge for that brief summer day,
While through the briny mists of memory play
Those gray sea-cities, snowy sails, blue skies,
The soulful lustre of those dark-brown eyes
That from my dreams shall never fade away.

Sonnets.

CARPE DIEM.

What joy compares with joy of giving joy ?

To see the sunshine of a pleasure scour,

As in a Tuscan May-day's morning hour,

O'er tear-tired features, as of old so coy ;

To note the willing fingers as they toy

With token sweet, and hear in grateful shower

That from life's lowlands you have plucked a flower

Love on his crimson banner shall employ.

O would the past were not an iron tome,

That I could rip some unkind pages out,

And write them tender !—but the lips are dumb

That quivered at each evanescent flout,

The eyes are to *lo dolce lome* numb

That scanned my April face with anxious doubt.

NEWPORT AT NOON.

The sunbeams glinted from empurpled cloak,
Like burning glances from a mantled love ;
A wind blew seaward, and loose sand above
Swept down the hardened beach in lines of smoke ;
With misted edge the claret billows broke,
Spilled on the marbled ebb, and spreading drove
The piping snipe that on the wave-ware throve
Toward carrion crow, which rose with boding croak.

On shadowed waters lit with streaks of green
And fringed around the cliffs with breakers hoar,
A cutter, keeling in each gust, was seen ;
While through impenetrable blue there wore,
From straining eyes, a spectral ship serene
On a landless voyage to an alien shore.

Sonnets.

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

When that gaunt spectre born of rue and fear
Stands at my elbow as if rooted fast,
And points a bony finger at the past
While scowling on the future with a leer,
Then shows thy spirit from that dreamy sphere,
Where thou, calm dreamer, in thy dreams shalt last
To play the seer in Fancy's phantom cast,
And lo ! the grisly shape doth disappear.

Sweeter than nature is thy lucid rhyme
Reflecting nature's image and thine own—
A gentle actor in life's tragic mime.
Yet when the clock's reverberating tone
Recalls thy summons and the rust of time,
The vision melteth, and I muse alone.

TO A FRIEND.

'T is true : my verse is sad ; for when I write
A shadow dusks the page, and memory hears
The dearest voice that ever thrilled my ears—
O friend ! thy soul hath never known such blight.
How sweetly dawns this morning in the night
As from the deep the clear full-moon appears !
My sun hath set for aye, yet from these tears
An orb may rise that shines with chastened light.

Thou shouldst have seen us under youthful skies :
Like knights with golden spurs we songful sped
Through brush and flood to warlike enterprise ;
But now alone life's thorny path I tread,
My heart is white from bleeding, and these eyes
Oft glance expectant for a comrade—dead !

Sonnets.

A COOL WAVE.

Three clouds like fleeces spread upon the sky!
Are they the harbingers of promised wind
That from heat's thralldom will enfree the mind,
While heaves the bosom with a grateful sigh?
Ah, yes!—as westward turns the feverish eye,
Cool breezes blow, and drooping thought unbind,
Like Christian lances that a comrade find
In Moslem bondage praying he may die.

So sweeps an act of kindness o'er despair,
Reviving courage, like some martial song,
In one that roams the flowerless realms of care—
One that hath sweated under burning wrong,
Hath worn alms-garments made of lip-spun air,
And fed upon good wishes for so long.

Sonnets.

THE INNER FRIEND.

He thought of all his friendships in the past :
Like dreams they were, from which a sleeper wakes
When o'er the roofs a dreaded morning breaks—
Like white cloud-temples ruined by a blast ;
Of his eager search for one that doth outlast
Life's wintry change of season ; where each takes
No more than he would give, and laughing stakes
All for his friend on Fortune's doubtful cast.

And as he pondered what himself had been,
He felt his breast with conscious power distend,
And then he seemed to hear a voice serene,
As from the trusty lips of some strong friend :
“ I have upborne you through each tragic scene,
Fear not ! I shall upbear you to the end.”

Sonnets.

A FIRESIDE MUSING.

Florence ! it seems as though by Love's decree
Thou and that city should be called the same—
The fair Florentia dowered with Dante's fame,
The Arno's bride that ruled wild Tuscany.
'T was there my youthful Fancy bore to me
Its first, its dearest child ; and at the name
My crackling spirits burst into a flame
That fronts with gold these midnight dreams of thee.

The flower that symbols innocence and grace
Gave to the Queen of Art her christening,
And on her crimson shield assumed its place :
That lily, love, doth mystic fragrance fling,
And o'er these ruddy embers floats thy face
As white as winter and as sweet as spring.

Sonnets.

AD PATRIAM.

My country, thou hast never seemed to me,
Thy restless son, a mother overkind :
Alone I bore child-fevers of the mind,
Nor ever dreamed that I should owe to thee
The first sweet words of cheer. I still foresee
A sickening voyage 'gainst a heading wind,
And that late landing on thy shores embrined
When they are dead whose welcome prized would be.

Nor deemed I thou wert dear to me, my land ;
But when, returning on a darkened sea,
I saw Fire Island blazing like a brand,
While signal rockets, whizzing from our lee,
Burst into stars ! I blessed thy homely strand,
And knew my heart was thine immutably.

Sonnets.

THE UNDER LAND.

Chief Opaleeta, who at first seemed drowned,
Told of a Land beneath Lacombe's expanse,
Where stars to the swing of summer breezes dance,
And golden flowers and gorgeous birds abound ;
Where souls at sunset, on the wigwam ground
Near streams of honey hallowed by romance,
Sing songs of love's and life's deliverance ;
Where air is food, where rest—heart-rest—is found.

O love ! were this sweet Indian legend true,
I 'd clasp thee to my troubled breast, and leap
Into this blissful lake of spangled blue—
This world of watery light ; and sinking deep
Beneath the waves that 'gin to blur the view,
Avoid the marge lest friends disturb our sleep.

Sonnets.

A BEECH-TREE.

Sweet Quakeress of the forest, near to thee
Are a ghostly sycamore, a lordly pine,
A boorish oak enriched with golden vine
And one stiff lover from far Lombardy.
Yet mingling branches with thine own too free,
As by some nature-meddling god's design
That beauty shall with ugliness entwine,
There stands a stunted, sour crab apple tree.

Helen, the flowering ground of wealth is thine,
And heaven's favorites of high degree
Crowd round thee for a glance of love divine
From eyes that never glassed a misery
Save when they gazed with tenderness in mine :
Why, dearest, waste thy witchery on me ?

Sonnets.

PARRHASIUS.

Still showeth through the veil of ages sped
A dark-haired Greek, with fire-dilating eyes,
Painting a fettered god, while near him lies
A tortured slave from whom life's friend hath fled.
One strong convulsion ! then a gush of red !
Quick o'er the pale the crimsoned pencil flies
Staining the canvas with immortal dyes,
Then rattling falls : the tortured slave is dead.

There is a painter in the poet's brain
That limns his soul, a captive on the rack
Writhing at moments in Promethean pain.
Paint on ! a bosomed grief one heart doth crack,
Whilst anguish bodied breaketh many a chain,
And warneth mortals from the Titan's track.

SMILES AND TEARS.

Laugh, lady, laugh ! my love you cannot chill,
Though no responsive flushes meet its view :
A mountain lily fresh with morning dew
Bears sweetest thoughts, yet feels no mother thrill.
Then, Odin-like, lest Reason's eye work ill,
I 'll cast it in the depths of dreams untrue
To dim its lustre, and Love's orb renew
With waters palmed from Fancy's healing rill.

You lack in warmth ? then you in warmth I vest
By feigning you so robed : in such dear tasks
An alchemist finds the fabled alkahest
That solves the real ; and all that beauty asks,
Or doth require—nay, love, I do but jest :
That tear upon your cheek my heart unmasks.

Sonnets.

MY THEATRE.

“A sterling play, perhaps, yet I ’ll not go :
This antique fireplace be my mimic stage,
These flames my actors ; see them fret and rage
Like fiery youths that feel the draught of woe.”
Alone : one brilliant blaze falls quickly low,
And fitful dies : alas, sweet personage,
The glowing future that thou didst presage
None save myself will even care to know.

O that white face time never will restore !
O scenes of childhood rising but to blight !
O death—a voice comes from the open door,
“You should have gone, the comedy was bright,
And laughter wept that she could laugh no more ;
What had you on ?” —“A tragedy to-night.”

UNDER THE STARS.

How many nights like this have rolled away
Peopled with thoughts like ours, and left behind
No footprints—no rude record to remind
Our wandering souls of souls erstwhile astray !
Fair youth, like yon thin cloud of lightest gray
'Gainst which that agèd pine is sharply lined,
Steals heedless off before the gentlest wind ;
And dreams, like stars, dissolve at touch of day.

Old musings, love ! bedewed with primal tears,
And full of awe as ebon rosary found
In some long-vacant cell. Perchance in years
Two lovers on the same vague journey bound
May in this humble carving read their fears,
And learn that lovers dead once trod this ground.

Sonnets.

THE STREETS AT MIDNIGHT.

Rank vapors from the steaming earth arise,
And swiftly past the laboring moon are blown,
Which, like a bauble in the rapids thrown,
Gleams bright, then sinks into the whitened skies.
Beneath the brilliant lamplight one descries
A cat with fiery eyeballs limping down,
And then a slattern woman of the town,
Poor soul ! not lust but hunger in her eyes.

O friend, if you have never roamed the street,
Aware your burdens must with years accrue,
Yet suffering for each suffering thing you meet—
If you have never starward raised your view,
Fate questioning, and read your life's defeat,
Turn o'er the page : it was not writ for you.

THE LOVE CHASE.

The sun hangs low and golden in the west,
And look ! the hunter's moon is rising white,
Like an anxious face pursuing flying light,
While round her love the fickle clouds seem blest.
Hers is a hopeless though determined quest,
And that east storm will overtake her flight
Ere she hath trolled the concave of the night
And urged into the waves for mythic rest.

No omen this, my love ; for we shall tread
Long sunlit stretches through the realms of art,
And silvered pathways when our youth is fled :
No heavenly law doth hold our souls apart,
Nor need that destined darkness near with dread—
He fears not Nature's frown that knows her heart.

Sonnets.

TO A MARIGOLD.

Dear love-child of the earth and lustful sun,
Thy scent revives the dreams of dewy years
Undarkened by death's shadow. When all fears
For high ambition and for loved ones gone
Dissolve in the silence of a world undone,
Thy beauteous kindred on unnumbered spheres
Will filigree the green by crystal meres—
Voluptuous flowers ere mortals are begun.

Like sunburnt lass from poet's fancy sprung,
Thou seem'st to echo in responsive strain
The silent voice that speaks a lieless tongue.
How sweet to be unvexed by selfish pain,
Like thee upon this quickening meadow flung,
And fade in peace, content that nature gain.

MORNING.

An eastern maiden robed in woven wind,
The budding Morn with roseate blushes flies
From Night's dark chamber, casting tearful eyes
Upon voluptuous sweets that lie behind.
At balmy breath, the wondering flowers unbind,
Like orbs unclosing at a lover's sighs,
Whilst warbling voices in a carol rise,
And peals the ocean like an organ shrined.

Thus ever, love, in life's auroral years
Thy flushing form enlaced in clinging white,
With panting bosom, to thy love appears.
Ah, senseless hour ! to hold melodious rite
When, gemming beauty with thy crystal tears,
Thou fled'st from me, as dewy Morn from Night.

Sonnets.

OLD MANUSCRIPTS.

From walnut chest made by a loving hand
That ne'er on earth will clasp my own again,
I take the first wild products of my brain,
So neatly penned and tied with scarlet band.
Dear folded hopes, whenever you are scanned
I view, with mournful yet unselfish pain,
My former self as one by trouble slain—
A gallant youth that built upon the sand.

And am I still a child?—is what I write
But florid phrases that no theme impart,
Confused in form and color, shade and light?
Will it be read by those of gentle heart,
As through these blurring tears I read to-night
The youthful artist, not his faulty art?

Sonnets.

A REBEL.

Nay, I shall breathe rebellious to the last !
Though I have capped to power, I never knelt,
And for love-wrought submission ever felt
The hell of manhood shamed : whene'er I cast
Mine eyes on strong Oppression in the past,
And note the blows his mailed hand hath dealt,
All peaceful thoughts to seething passion melt
That would the souls of his dead minions blast.

O for the strength of some Norse god to slay
This great frost giant, and in streams of blood
Drown his accursèd race ! from his foul clay
Sweet Liberty would fashion land and flood,
A vaulted sky and clouds that o'er it play,
And dower her world with native plenitude.

Sonnets.

LOVE.

Love rules with Art from nature's ruby throne :
He tints gray scenes with flushes of the heart,
And lends to winds, that from their caverns start
When else is hushed in sleep, a sweeter tone
Than roll of heavenly spheres : when he is flown
All colors from the darkening earth depart
As western waters quench each sunny dart,
And to his widowed Queen the night airs moan.

In gloom I view each dear ambition crossed,
And life dark leagues of heated sand astray,
Yet whispers come that hope should not be lost,
For love is strong as when with spirits gay
I roamed the fields made crisp by morning's frost,
And felt that shadows soon would fade away.

NARCISSUS.

A love-pledge broken !—'t is a common phrase
That hath uncommon meaning to me now :
It seems like death to whom we never bow
Till falls some comrade of our youthful days.
This heart, which gave thee throbbing words of praise,
With throbbing words of scorn doth thee endow ;
Thou 'lt feel the fragments of thy shattered vow
Bleeding thy weary feet in lonesome ways.

How many lessons from the gods we learn !
Myself was listless to a nymph that flies,
As love-lorn Echo, with a voice eterne ;
Alas ! I saw thee glassing vermeil skies,
Like limpid fount with marge of lady-fern,
And loved my image mirrored in thine eyes.

Sonnets.

TO LORD BYRON.

My country's dark-brown eagle tipped with white
Is like thee, Byron : of far-piercing eye
And structure in which strength and beauty vie ;
Large, graceful, swift—magnificent in flight !
With one beat of his pinions leaving sight.
Yea, he is like thee when he doth espy
Emerging osprey or decaying fry,
And basely swoops from his ethereal height.

Still, in the sanctuary of my soul
Thou art as laureate of youth enshrined ;
Age cannot dim the radiant aureole
That round thee memory doth ever find ;
The deep, blue ocean in thy verse will roll
Till death close up the portals to my mind.

Sonnets.

A SEPTEMBER NIGHT.

Gray Sorrow now seems brooding o'er the earth :
The sullen clouds are flying from the plain
Before a chill east wind ; the drizzling rain
Makes no storm sound to thrill the fireside mirth
Of mortals snugly housed—there is a dearth
Of light, of form, of color, and refrain,
As when God's Spirit moved upon the main,
To give the world and all its beauties birth.

My shivering Fancy sits with drooping wing,
Like sombre bird upon a spectral tree
That from an exhalation seems to spring—
It feels as though it nevermore should see
The clear blue sky, and hear wild hymnals ring
As the bow of promise clasps the tearful lea.

Sonnets.

AN ANSWER TO A LETTER.

Your word, dear, bears me from this stifling town,
Like steed enchanted, over hills and tide
To landscape limned by you : like languid bride,
Fair Luna, rising, slips her golden gown
For touring robe of silver, and looks down
Into this glassing lake with gentle pride,
On misty trees in middle distance spied,
And o'er that far-off hill with faint-blue crown.

It almost seems that I was with you, lass,
Beneath those willows, as you swinging lay
With dainty slipper tiptoe on the grass,
While trill and chirrup made the moorland gay,
As if night's homely songsters strove to pass
The florid warblers of the dazzling day.

THE GOLDEN EAGLE.

Behold the Golden Eagle in his flight !

 In slow, increasing circles mounting high,
 He pierces through a storm cloud in the sky ;
Still wheels he on like some majestic sprite.

No carrion feeds his royal appetite ;

 And, far removed from man's profaning pry,
 His eyrie on some lofty crag doth lie,
In awful solitude—through day as night.

A noble life !—to hearken to the roar

 Of cataracts that human senses stun,
On pinions bold the heavens to explore,

 And every base or worldly thing to shun ;
Ah me ! when teaching once his young to soar,
 'T was seen he ever circled toward the sun.

Sonnets.

A STORM.

'Gainst heaven's light dark clouds appear combined
And bolts of thunder peal, like thoughts that roll
Through centuries of gloom from soul to soul,
And rumble on to future realms of mind.
The pale-faced lightning, voiced by roaring wind,
Seems some great spirit held in Earth's control
That strives to clear the air of needless dole,
Then weeps these drops for peerless hopes resigned.

Would that I could on warlike field contend
With lance and sword for native right to think,
And conquering live, or meet a knightly end ;
But I am locked in dungeon, where the clink
Of griding chains and noisome things offend,
And when I thirst they give me gall to drink.

THE BIRTH OF THE WATER-LILY.

From Blazing Sun, victorious from the wars,
In birch canoe the fair Oseetah flies :
Deftly their flashing paddles fall and rise
Over the fallow waves and foaming bars
That gird the Isle of Elms. A foot-rock jars
Her fragile bark, and up the steep she hies,
On fleet Wayotah turns her fawn-like eyes,
Then leaps into the Lake of Clustered Stars.

And lo ! on morning wave her sprite appears
In forms of wondrous beauty, gold and white—
Emblems of love and virtue bathed in tears ;
Whose hearts upclose at fiery lover's flight,
And open at his coming, when the meres
Are hallowed by his chaste auroral light.

Sonnets.

THE MOUNTAIN-CLIMBER.

Count me not with the lost though I lie prone
 Upon this narrow ledge ; my garments torn,
 My body bruised, and my features worn
To tearless pallor. Hearts are not of stone,
And strength is gathering while I feebly moan
 To think of useless hardships bravely borne
 Through ways mistaken by an eye forlorn :
You had a mountain guide ; I climbed alone.

See how I rise from that fall's cruel shock ;
 Look at these muscles swelling in my arms
As round this root my sinewy fingers lock.
 Come wind and hail, come falls and soul-alarms,
Before day closes I shall gain yon rock,
 And view the landscape rich in Alpine charms.

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